MAXIMUMROCKNROLL

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MAXIMUMROCKNROLL

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- •Everywhere else: $10 each (air). 12 issue sub for $112 (airmail only). 6 issue sub for $59 (airmail only).

Let us know which issue to start with!

BACK ISSUES AVAILABLE: #156 pts. 1 & 2, 161, 175, 179-181, 184, 186-197, 199, 200, 204, 206-210, 214-215, 218, 221-225, 227, 229-236, 238-306 **See page 4 for pricing and other info.**

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1/6 page: (2.5" x 5") $33
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TOP 10

For what it's worth, here's some of the MRR reviewers' current Top 10 (or so) things we've reviewed this month.

JUSTIN BRIGGS

DILLINGER FOUR-Civil War-LP
DEMERIT-Bastards of the Nation-CD
WHITE LUNG-Magazines-EP
DESCARADOS-LP
MEATLOCKER-LP
VOGUE-Dickfaced-12"
KIM PHUC-Wormwood Star/Freaking Out...-45
HIS ELECTRO BLUE VOICE-Duuug-EP
NN-Buitres-EP
TY SEGALL-LP

TIM BROOKS

THE YOUNG-4-Songs-EP
DEFEKTORS-No to the Night/Torn to Pieces-45
AUTISTIC YOUTH-Smash + Kill-EP
NN-Buitres-EP
IMPULSE INTERNATIONAL-Real Kid/World Hates Me
TRANZMITORS-Live A Little More-12"
PERFECT FITS-Radio Transmitter/Songs About Girls
BABY SHAKES-The First One-LP
THE CLEAN-Anthology-LP
TRISTESS-Hog & Lag Blues-LP

MITCH CARDWELL

V/A-Puget Power #5-EP
LILI Z-The Two of Us-LP
WAX MUSEUMS-LP
BLACK ORPHAN-Transmission-EP
PERFECT FITS-Radio Transmitter/Songs About Girls
LEADERS-Candy Pants & Rub You Wrong-EPs
HUNX AND HIS PUNX-45
WOUNDED LION-Carol Cloud/Pony People-45
KRYSMOPOMPAS-2xLP
Goner Fest 5-live

PAUL CURRAN & ARIEL AWESOME

ACTS OF SEDITION / SADVILLE-spit EP
KILLER DREAMER-1000 Years of Solitude-LP
HIPS-Backstabber/Holy Bible-45
HUNX AND HIS PUNX-45
LEUZEMIA-LP
NN-Buitres-EP
V/A-No Side to Fall in-10"
VIVIAN GIRLS-I Can't Stay/Blind Spot-45
THE YOUNG-4-Songs-EP
Paul *finally* getting to see RADON-live!!

LAYLA GIBBON

DIE KREUZEN-LP
NIXE-LP
MIDDLE CLASS-Out of Vogue-EP
BREATHING FIRE-Years of Lead-LP
VOGUE-Dickfaced-12" / SEX VID-Voyeur-EP
NN-Buitres-EP
WOUNDED LION-Carol Cloud/Pony People-45
LEUZEMIA-LP
HIPS-45 / COREY ORBISON-EP
THE CLEAN-Anthology-LP

BOB GOLDIE

IDLE HANDS-Gaunt but Overdosed-EP
SELVHENTER-Lillemor-EP
20/20-Going Up With My Girl/World of Fools-45
MIDDLE CLASS-Out of Vogue-EP
NIXE-LP
LOST CAUSE-Walk Alone-EP
FREEZE-Land of the Lost-LP
AUTISTIC YOUTH-Smash + Kill-EP
STAAGS!-Adult Brigade-EP
LIKE WOLVES-Dead Weight-EP

KENNY KAOS

VIVIAN GIRLS-I Can't Stay/Blind Spot-45
ROCK N ROLL ADVENTURE KIDS-45
THE PRAMBATH-I Will Walk My Way-EP
RICH WHITE MALES-We Ain't No Musicians-EP
THE GIRLS-Where Wolves Drink-LP
THE PLEASURE KILLS-Mission Boy/Pictures...-45
THE PEGS-Livin At the Surf Motel-EP
BABY SHAKES-The First One-LP
THE BEAVERS-Come on Let's Beav-10"
SHITTY LIMITS-45

CAROLYN KEDDY

BLACK ORPHAN-Transmission-EP
SO COW-Commuting-EP
SONIC CHICKEN 4-Midnight Girl-EP
HIPS-Backstabber/Holy Bible-45
JACUZZI BOYS-Island Ave-EP
KRYSMOPOMPAS-2xLP / NIXE-LP
TY SEGALL-LP / WAX MUSEUMS-LP
LILI Z-LP / LIGHTNING BEAT MAN-CD
V/A-Puget Power #5-EP
CONTAMINATORS / GET OFFS-live

MAXIMUM ROCKNROLL IS A MONTHLY PUBLICATION. ALL WORK IS DONATED AND NO ONE RECEIVES ANY SALARY. ALL PROCEEDS ARE EITHER INVESTED IN TECHNOLOGICAL IMPROVEMENTS OR GO TO OTHER SIMILARLY NOT-FOR-PROFIT PROJECTS. ANYONE IS WELCOME TO REPRINT ANYTHING FROM MRR, BUT ONLY IF IT'S NOT-FOR-PROFIT.

TOP 10

Please send two copies of vinyl, CD-only , or demo releases to the address on the previous page.

RAY LUJAN

THE GREATEST HITS-Hang Ups-EP
BABY SHAKES-LP / HUNX AND HIS PUNX-45
THE GIRLS-Where Wolves Drink-LP
IMPULSE INTERNATIONAL-Real Kid/World Hates Me
SO COW-EP / FUN HOGS-CD
CAUSE CO-MOTION-It's Time-CD
CLASS WAR KIDS-Strong People-CD
THE PLEASURE KILLS-45
POWERCHORDS-CD / THE YOUNG-4-Songs-EP
VIVIAN GIRLS-45 / BULTACOS-Matches-CD

ALLAN MCNAUGHTON

TRANZMITORS-Live A Little More-12"
THE CLEAN-Anthology-LP
DEFEKTORS-No to the Night/Torn to Pieces-45
NIXE-LP / NN-Buitres-EP
TRISTESS-Hog & Lag Blues-LP
KRYSMOPOMPAS-2xLP
THE YOUNG-4-Songs-EP
20/20-Going Up With My Girl/World of Fools-45
SO COW-Commuting-EP / WHITE LUNG-EP
AUTISTIC YOUTH-Smash + Kill-EP

NICK MANGEL

BLACK HAVEN-Lazarus-EP
SANCTIONS-Home Sweet Home-CD
RUSTED SHUT-Hot Sex-LP
PERSONALITY CRISIS-Creatures for a While-LP
OPERATION-Sa Lange...-CD
M:40-Industrilandskap-EP
LIMB FROM LIMB-Dismemberment-EP
LEUZEMIA-LP
GRIDE-Horizont Udalosti-LP
DEATHCYCLE-Prelude to Tyrany-CD

BRUCE ROEHRS

BONECRUSHER / I-9 / RIOT GUN / RAT CITY RIOT
HAMMERLOCK / NUTS + BOLTS / DISCIPLES-live
CRUCIAL CAUSE / RAT DAMAGE-split EP
TROTSKIDS-La Complete Vol. 2-LP
MALIGNANT TUMOR-In Full Swing-LP
FOR THE WORSE / KIDS OF CARNAGE-split EP
LIMB FROM LIMB-Dismemberment-EP
AUTISTIC YOUTH-Smash + Kill-EP
MEATLOCKER-LP
VOGUE-Dickfaced-12"

FRED SCHRUNK

KILLER DREAMER-1000 Years of Solitude-LP
AUTISTIC YOUTH-Smash + Kill-EP
TRANZMITORS-Live A Little More-12"
JONESIN' / SHANG-A-LANG-split EP
SHITTY LIMITS-45
NN-Buitres-EP
HERE COMES A BIG BLACK CLOUD-Pompeii-LP
GOD EQUALS GENOCIDE-Life of Doubt-EP
THE YOUNG-4-Songs-EP
Shellshag-live

CISSIE SCURLOCK

KIM PHUC-Wormwood Star/Freaking Out...-45
MEATLOCKER-LP
HIS ELECTRO BLUE VOICE-Duuug-EP
THE YOUNG-4-Songs-EP
NN-Buitres-EP
LEUZEMIA-LP
DESCARADOS-LP
VOGUE-Dickfaced-12"
NIXE-LP
DEVOUR-LP / LOST CAUSE-Walk Alone-EP

MARTIN SORRONDEGUY

LEUZEMIA-LP
AUTISTIC YOUTH-Smash + Kill-EP
DESCARADOS-LP
WAX MUSEUMS-LP
VOGUE-Dickfaced-12"
MEATLOCKER-LP
SELVHENTER-Lillemor-EP
UNDER AL KRITIK-Insomnia-EP
IDLE HANDS-Gaunt but Overdosed-EP
HUNX AND HIS PUNX-45

ZINE TOP TEN

Alien Boy
Mix-Tapers Do It Better#3/Your Day Will Come #2
Big Whoop #2
Go Metric #22
Seven Inches To Freedom #6
Squart #2
Urinal Gum #6
Westside Angst #13/You #353
Multiplicities #1-2
Slap In The Face: My Obcession With GG Allin

MRR SHITWORKERS

Sam Alvarado
Diane Anastasio
Peter Avery
Judy Balmin
Michelle Barnhardt
Julia Booze
Tim Brooks
Dan Butler
Eric Butterworth
Ariel Celeste
Karoline Collins
Robert Collins
Cat Conte
Rob Coons
Talya Cooper
Arwen Curry
Craigums
Paul Curran
Andy Darling
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A WHOLE CRAPLOAD OF MRR BACK ISSUES...

#156 pt 1/May '96. Public Toys, Crunch, Peter & The Test Tube Babies, Nails Of Hawaiian, Splash 4, Yawp!, Lifetime, Sickoids.

#156 pt 2/May '96. Australian Special: Beanflipper, Melancholy, Blitz Babiez, Crank, SubRosa, Mindsnare, TMT, H-Block, B-Sides, Fallout, Frenzal Rhomb, Lawnsmell, One Inch Punch, Chickenshit, No Deal.

#161/Oct '96. Jet Bumpers, Steel Miners, Divisia, Lopo Drido, Red #9, Nothing Cool, Sink, Sires, Newtown Grunts.

#175/Dec '97. One Man Army, Those Unknown, Boiling Man, Piao Chong, Exploding Crustaceans, Last Year's Youth, Heartdrops, Dirty Burds, Dimestore Haloes.

#179/April '98. Boy Sets Fire, Tres Kids, Idyls, Spat & The Guttersnipes, The Posers, Explosive Kate, Douche Flag.

#180/May '98. Reinforce, Discontent, TV Killers, Slack Action, Eyeliners, Mademoiselle, MK Ultraviolence, Haulin' Ass, 97a, Infiltrators, Jack Saints, Stray Bullets.

#181/June '98. Grapefruit, Druggies, DDI, Bonecrusher, Normals, All Bets Off, Stiletto Boys, Summerjack, Cell Block 5.

#184/Sept '98. Absentees, Devoid of Faith, UXA, Ümlaut, Four Letter Word, Streetwalkin' Cheetahs, Ricanstruction, Libertine, Indecision, Snarkout Boys.

#186/Nov '98. Registrators, August Spies, Marilyn's Vitamins, Chinese Love Beads.

#187/Dec '98. Real Kids, Sawn Off, Cretins, Spider Cunts, Heroines, 3rd Party, No Class.

#188/Jan '99. Stitches, Neighbors, Mansfields, Real Swinger, Marauders, Mark Bruback, Mars Moles, DOA.

#189/Feb '99. Monster X, Peter & the Test Tube Babies, Steam Pig, Maurauders, Yakuza, Dead Beat, Halfways, Hot Rod Honeys, DeRita Sisters.

#190/Mar '99. John Holstrom, Powerhouse, Brezhnev, Slappy, Black Pumpkin, Smartbomb ca, Wanda Chrome, Long Gones, Smogtown, Halfways, Tilt.

#191/April '99. Murder Suicide Pact, Kil Kare, Dudman, Super Hi-Fives, Better Than Elvis DJs, Pet Peeves, Loose Ends, Slingshot Episode.

#192/May '99. Los Crudos, Burning Kitchen, Henry Fiat's Open Sore, Polythene, Kangaroo Recs.

#193/June '99. Munster Recs, DS-13, Safety Pins, Pussycats, Piolines, False Alarm, Darlington, Bad Stain, Bodies, Houseboy, Mullets.

#194/July '99. Deathreat, Last Match, God Hates Computers, Fokkewolf, Flesh Eating Creeps, Aside, Hoppin' Mad, Kid Dynamite, Thee Outcasts.

#195/Aug '99. Moral Crux, RC5, Have Nots, Ill Tempered, Dysentery, Greg Higgins, Revlons, Larry & the Gonowheres.

#196/Sept '99. Hopscotch, Catharsis, Orchid, The Pricks, Grissle, Product X, Reaching Forward, Emerge, Third Degree, "Epicenter Zone '90-'99".

#197/Oct '99. Reducers SF, Lower Class Brats, Reactor 7, TheGodsHateKansas, Futuro Incierto, Showcase Showdown, Waifle, Flat Earth Recs.

#199/Dec '99. Locust, Ratos de Porao, USV, Razlog Za, G-3, Swarm, WHN?, Mt. St. Helens, Black Cat Music, Enemy Soil.

#200/Jan '00. American Steel, Curse, Gee Vaucher, Hers Never Existed, Aaron Cometbus, Active distro, Toxic Narcotic, MRR catalogue #100-200.

#204/May '00. Cocksparrer, Talk Is Poison, Red Scare, Put Downs, Out Cold, Geraldine, Michael Knight, CBGaV, Pillage People.

#206/July '00. Drunk, ESL, Ambition Mission, Lord High Fixers, Cripple Bastards, Dig Dug, Federation X, Amulet, Valentine Killers.

#207/Aug '00. Harum Scarum, Raw Power, Unseen, Pekinska Patka, Hudson Falcons, Dementia 13, Confine, Allergic to Whores.

#208/Sept '00. Le Shok, the Commies, the Chemo Kids, Day of Mourning, Affront, Diaspora, Whippersnapper, Hopeless/Sub City, Prank, Countdown to Oblivion

#209/Oct '00. Loose Lips, Godstomper, Peace of Mind, FYP, I Farm, Annalise, Cattle Decapitation, Riot/Clone.

#210/Nov '00. J Church, Profane Existence, Pezz, Pre-Teens, Templars, This Machine Kills, Subtonix, OB.

#214/Mar '01. Crispus Attucks, Fetish, Lifes Halt, Mr. Roboto, Dream Dates, Satan McNugget, Havoc, Briefs.

#215/April '01. No Means No, Vitamin X, Injections, Y, Dils, Last In Line, Don Austin, Deranged Records

#218/July '01. Guyana Punchline, Les Sexareenos, The Devil Is Electric, Red Monkey, White Collar Crime, Forca Macabra, The Ataris, Suicide, The Mob

#221/Oct '01. The G8 Summit, Reflections, Soophie Nun Squad, Totalitär, True North, Wontons, Sin Dios, Bottles & Skulls, Scarred For Life, Flowers in the Dustbin, Remains of the Day, Ritchie Whites, B'67.

#222/Nov '01. Dios Hastio, Tragedy, Four Letter Word, *Salad Days* author Charles Romalotti, Very Metal, Maurice's Little Bastards, the Rotters, MDC Brazilian tour diary, the Cravats, JR Ewing, Dutch scene, extended news section, "Globalization Rhetoric & Reality,"

#223/Dec '01. "US Policy in the Middle East," "Revisiting 1948," Manifesto Jukebox, Good Riddance, Pokers, Viimenen Kolonna, Bluebloods, Vitamin X tour diary, Flakes, Pg. 99, the Mob, 7 Days of Samsara.

#224/Jan '02. "Legislation Since Sept. 11, Rendencion 9.11, Metro Youth, Severed Head of State, Piranhas, Paraf, Backstabbers, Inc, An Albatross, Citizen Fish Tour, SPAM Records, the Virus, Action Time.

#225/Feb '02. Lengua Armada, Breaker Breaker, 3 Yrs. Down, Scrotum Grinder, Turun Tauti, Flux Of Pink Indians, Holding On, Pauki, 86'd, See You In Hell, Red Light Sting, Nazis From Mars, Scare Tactic.

#227/Apr '02. Bellrays, Rhinos, Wasted, Kristofer Pasanen, Business, Assert, DS 13 tour report, Life Set Struggle, Iowaska, Zounds.

#229/June '02. Countdown To Putsch, The Awakening, Dave Hill Distribution, Holier Than Thou, Kill Devil Hills, Sound Of Failure, E.T.A., Nubs, Les Baton Rouge, New Disorder Records, Career Suicide, Swellbellys, The Sinyx.

#230/July '02. Bitchin', Redencion 911, Phantom Limbs, Secretions, Holy Molar, Sharp Knife, Mighty John Waynes, A Global Threat, Groovie Ghoulies, Reproach, Annie Anxiety.

#231/Aug '02. Epoxies, Puppy Vs. Dyslexia, Koro, Blocko, Amdi Petersen's Armé, Piss & Vinegar Zine, Schizophrenic Records, Toys That Kill, Give Us Barabbas, Dirt.

#232/Sept '02. "No Future" article, Lost, Fartz, Sell Outs, Razors Edge, Stakeout, Dillinger Four, All or Nothing HC, Fleshies, Bridge Nine Records, Akashic Books, Liberty.

#233/Oct '02. "All Ages" article, Scholastic Deth, Runnamucks, Sinners & Saints, Panic, Gasolheads, Jewws, Futures, Michael Landon's Commandos, Storm the Tower, Against Me!, Balance of Terror, Class Assassins, Spazm 151.

#234/Nov '02. Snobs, What Happens Next? Brazilian tour, The Oath, Radio 4, Feederz, Charm City Suicides, Selfish, Riot 99, End On End, Peawees, Born/Dead.

#235/Dec '02. Anti-war Special Issue. Articles: "Reading for Democracy," "War on Iraq?" "Unfinished American Revolution," Resource Guide, "US Involvement in Iraq,""Axis of Empire." Long Island DIY Scene, What Happens Next? Brazilian tour part 2, Smalltown, Kylesa, Crash & Burn.

#236/Jan '03. Mr. California & State Police, Iron Lung, Riff Randells, Chainsaw, *Artcore*, Latterman, Travis Cut, Phenomenauts, Pretty Little Flower, X-Cretas.

#238/Mar '03. World Burns To Death, Chronics, Vilently Ill, Dystopia, Pilger, Exotic Fever, Brezhnev, R.A.M.B.O., Blown To Bits, Put To Shame, Deconditioned, This Bike Is A Pipe Bomb, Monsters.

#239/Apr '03. Romanian D-beat, Meconium Records, Amazombies, Abandoned Hearts Club, Mike V. & the Rats, Nicki Sicki, Bigamists, Bolivia article, Negatives, Kuolema, Defiance.

#240/May '03. I Quit, Apers, Headless Horsemen, Lesser of Two, Barse, Nightmare, Music Zine Roundtable, Exploding Hearts, Flesh Packs, Blacklist Brigade.

#241/June '03. Tyrades, Lumbergh, The Stand By Me, New Mexican Disaster Squad, Cut the Shit, Libertinagem, 17th Class, the Ends, He Who Corrupts, Deathbag, Cria Cuervos.

#242/July '03. Pensacola & San Francisco punk protest reports, John Wilkes Booze, Anfo, Bob Suren, Migra Violenta, Jackson 8, *Snakepit* zine , Krigshot, the Rites, Deadfall.

#243/Aug '03. "Media Alliance and the FCC," Striking Distance, Malcontents, Invisible City, Books Lie, Charm City Art Space, Hopeless Dregs of Humanity, I Shot Cyrus, Sunday Morning Einsteins, What the Kids Want, Onion Flavored Rings.

#244/Sept '03. None More Black, Deadline, Rai Ko Ris, Boxed In, Exploding Hearts, Raving Mojos, Blackout Terror, Morticia's Lovers, Thee Fine Lines, *Trust* zine.

#245/Oct '03. No Time Left, Riistetyt, Intense Youth, The Gimmies, Ass End Offend, Artimus Pyle, La Fraction, Kung Fu Rick, The Horror.

#246/Nov '03. Punk & Resistance in Israel, Letters from Palestine, No Choice, FM Knives, Bury the Living, Marked Men, The Dirty Burds, Provoked.

#247/Dec '03. DSB, The Boils, Popular Shapes, Phoenix Foundation, Bathtub Shitter, Meet the Virus, Cropknox, "Punk Babies on Tour" Article.

#248/Jan '04. Discharge, Superhelicopter, Jed Whitey, Black Friday '29, Find Him And Kill Him, The Lids, Impratical Cockpit, Face Up To It, History Of Maximum Rocknroll Radio.

#249/Feb '04. From Ashes Rise, Hagar the Womb, This Is My Fist, Skip Jensen, Gride, Katy Otto/Mike Taylor Dialogue, John Yates, Pointing Finger.

#250/Mar '04. Best Records of 2003, Miami FTAA protests, Clorox Girls, FIYA, "La Villita: Chicago Pilsen Scene," Terminus Victor, Restarts, Damage Done, Knights of New Crusade.

#251/April '04. The Fuse!, Väkivaltaa, Modern Machines, Microcosm, Migra Violenta Euro tour diary, Allegiance, Neurotic Swingers, Xavier Lepaige Photos, Le Scrawl, Vrah.

#252/May '04. Fucked Up, Firestarter, Inepsy, Laukaus, Great Clearing Off, Radio Reelers, Extreme Noise Records, 46 Short, The State, John The Baker, Free Verse, Chrystaei Branchaw photos.

#253/June '04. Sweet J.A.P., Gorilla Angreb, Vöetsek, Minority Blues Band, Scruvy Dogs, Molotov Cocktail, Kidnappers, Schifosi, King Ly Chee, YDI.

#254/July '04. No Hope For The Kids, Dropdead, Diskords, Breakfast, Asschapel, I Excuse, Strung Up, To Hell & Back, Four Eyes, Lamant, Gammits MW, scene reports from Portland, Boston and Germany.

#255/Aug '04. "Punk's Not Dead, Reagan Is" Special Issue. Leatherface, Get It Away, The Hatepinks, Keen Monkey Work, New York City, South Dakota, Czech Republic, Philippines, Russia.

#256/Sep '04. The Observers, Witchhunt, Annihilation Time, Zann, Eskapo, FxPxO, Haymarket Riot, Fourth Rotor, Les Georges Lenigrad, Texas scene, Newfoundland, Indiana, England.

#257/Oct '04 The Election Issue, Jesse Townley, Matt Gonzalez, Raftus, Fighting Dogs, Hero Dishonest, Kickz, The Boss Martians, Reactionary Three, Slovakia, Australia, South Wales, South East Asia.

#258/Nov '04. Career Suicide, Cathy Wilkerson of the Weather Underground, No Fucker, The Repos, Dominatrix, Ashtray, Deadstop, Midnight Creeps, Michale Graves, The Diffs, The Shemps, Abi Yo Yo's.

#259/Dec '04. Bad Business, Penelope Houston, Rambo, AI, Ass, I Attack, The Krunchies, A-Lines, Insurgence Records, The Hates, Accidents, Massgrav, The Critics, Merciless Game, SF Hotel Workers Strike, photos from Japan, SoCal & the Bay Area.

#260/Jan '05. Technocracy, The Total End, Only Crime, True North, Partisans, For The Worst, Dick Spikie, Straight to Hell, Black Cross, Action, Ergs, Rusty Nails, Queer Activism in London, Greg Shaw tribute, John Peel tribute, Andrew "Stig" Sewell tribute, Beijing punk photos.

#261/Feb '05. Year End Top Tens, Riistetyt, Lost Cherrees, Complete Control, Cheap Sex, Gasoline Please, Beerzone, Greyskull, MOTO, Water Into Beer Fanzine, Swe-Punk scumpit, Japan punk photos, Bay Area punk photos, Texas, Russia, and Malaysia scene reports.

#262/March '05. Kärnvapen Attack, Neo Boys, Catholic Boys, Dead Moon, Wreckage, Frantix, Armitage Shanks, Wendy Kroys, To What End?, Cell Block 5, Bent Outta Shape, Ah-Nah Tron, Slovakia, Indonesia, and Illinois scenes.

#263/April '05. All Crusties Spending Loud Night 2004, Bombenalarm, Battleship, APA, The Black Lips, Words That Burn, Flamingo 50, The Low Budgets, Mellakka, I Object, Antisect, Bay Area scene report, South Coast UK scene report.

#264/May '05. Crime, Love Songs, Bruce Banner, Intent, The Holy Mountain, Have Heart, The Bill Bondsmen, The Real Losers, archive photos, Bay Area scene photos, Taiwan and Rochester scene reports.

#265/June '05. Endless Nightmare, Hard Skin, Kolokol, Amebix, Transistor Transistor, The Safes, The Detonators, Finland scene report, France scene report, SoCal scene report.

#266/July. '05. The Carbonas, MDC, Destrux, Unkind, Hiretsukan, Giant Haystacks, Ohuzaru, Teenage Harlets, Michigan scene report, San Diego scene report, Eugene, OR scene report, photos.

#267/August '05. Knugen Faller, Sleeper Cell, Motorama, Gulcher Records history, Army of Jesus, The Slicks, Thee Merry Widows, Rotten Sound, The Faction (UK), Czech and New Zealand scene reports.

#268/September '05. Signal Lost, Gulcher Records history part two, Teenage Bottlerocket, Mattilda (aka Matt Bernstein Sycamore), The Spectacle, Bang Sugar Bang, Chumbawamba, Reason of Insanity, Forward To Death, Flyer art, Florida Scene Report, Bay Area scene report, photos.

#269/October '05. Hammer, Desastre, Human Eye, Les Bellas, Gasmask Terror, Randy "Biscuit" Turner tribute, Stalag 17 (UK), Stepbrothers, Retching Red, Weaving the Deathbag, Gather, Chicago and SoCal scene reports.

#270/November '05. Clorox Girls European Tour, Czolgosz, Regulations, Time Flys, Taxi, No More Lies, Oil!, Paddy Costello of the Dillinger Four, Smartpils, Revenge of Mongoloid, Pisschrist, Scene reports: Puerto Rico, UK, Russia.

#271/December '05. Besthöven, Abductee SD, Tractor Sex Fatality, George Harrison, Deathtoll, Photos by icki, Ice & The Iced, the Ulcers, Chimps Eat Bananas, Deranged / Criminal IQ / Kick'n'Punch Records. Scene reports: Iowa, Maine, Illinois.

#272/January '06. Conga Fury, Let's Grow, Frustration, Bastardass, Icons of Filth, Burial, Hrydjuverk, Cranked Up!, Urrke T & the Midlife Crisis, Tropezio, *Baboon of Sickness* zine. Scene reports: Austin, France, Michigan, Larry Wolfley photos.

#273/February '06. Fuses, Endstand, Out Cold, Pedestrians, Acts of Sedition, BadEatingHabits, Western Addiction, Jesus Fucking Christ, Toxic Waste, Punk photo spread, St. Louis, USA & Brighton, UK scene reports.

#274/March '06. Best of 2005, Formaldehyde Junkies, Brutal Knights, Kansan Uutiset, Hatred Surge, A-Heads, Manikin, Upinatem, Hips, Boston scene report, Punk photo spread.

#275/April '06. History of ABC No Rio (Part One), Ringers, Missbrukarna, '90s garage punk scumpit, Anatomi-71, After the Bombs, Rubella Ballet, RIP Pig Champion, Ricky Adam interview and photographs, Sean McGhee, Hard Skin US tour diary.

#276/May '06. "Is Business Killing Punk Rock?" business survey (Part One), History of ABC No Rio (Part Two), Vitamin X Asian Pacific tour diary, Soviet Valves Suburban Death Machine, Frustrations, George Hurchalla, Scene reports: Czech Republic and Greece.

#277/June '06. "Is Business Killing Punk Rock?" business survey (Part Two), Imperial Leather, Boom Boom Kid, Vitamin X Asian Pacific Tour (part two), "How to Make It Big!" by the Phantom Surfers, Magrudergrind, Poland.

#278/July '06. Billy Childish, Death Token, The First Step, Ramsey Kanaan of AK Press, Headache City, Deconditioned, Under Pressure, Insuiciety, Instigators, Malaysia Scene, Bay Area Scene Pics.

#279/August '06. Mika Miko, The Fall, Cardiac Arrest, Digger & the Pussycats, Massmord, Insect Warfare, The Astronauts, Canary Islands Photo Spread, Four Slicks, The Fallout, PAWNS, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, & Umeå, Sweden scenes.

#280/September '06. Hjerte Stop, Grupo Sub-1, Desperate Bicycles, Bill Daniel interview and photo spread, APF Brigade, Disconvenience, Southkore Fest photo spread, Rosenbombs, Up the Voltage, Euro photo spread, Svartenbrandt, Asheville, NC & world wide punk scene reports.

#281/October '06. Out With a Bang, Redd Kross, Derek Lyn Plastic, We March, Alan Milman, Rat Traps, Blood Robots, The Scarred, Gilbert Switzer, Japan & US photo spreads, Sweden & UK scene reports.

#282/November '06. The Feelers, PESD, Toxic Ephex, Auktion, Bruise Violet, *Trust* fanzine, The Homosexuals, The Effigies, Rat City Riot, New York City & North Carolina scene reports.

#283/December '06. Jay Reatard interview & photos, Crimes Against Humanity Records, A Touch of Hysteria, Doris Fanzine, Kvoteringen, '90s Punk Scumpit Part II, Black Chrome, The Dirty Water Club, photos, Tokyo scene report.

#284/January '07. Margaret Thrasher, 924 Gilman at 20 Years, Order of the White Rose, Regress, Subhumans (UK) Part One, Blank Its, Condenada, Genetic Control, photos, Syracuse & San Diego scene reports.

#285/February '07. Randy "Biscuit" Turner of the Big Boys & the early Texas punk scene, Lemuria, Ruin, Subhumans (UK) Part Two, The Blinds, Tranzistors, ANS, Riot This, La Piovra, Bay Area scene pics, Barcelona, Spain scene report.

#286/March '07. Best of 2006, Smartut Kahol Lavan, Electric Kisses, Holy Shit!, Lost Cherrees Part One, Go!, Kraljevo, Serbia, and Bakersfield, CA scene reports.

#287/April '07. Alicja Trout, Keith Rosson (*Avow* zine), Crap Corps, The Vicious, Scum System Kill, Lost Cherrees Part Two, Restless Youth, SBV, Australia, Kyiv, Ukraine, and Pittsburgh, PA scene reports.

#288/May '07. Clockcleaner, Pisschrist, The Rats (Sweden), Conflict (US), The Viletones, Violent Tumor, Czech Republic and East Texas scene reports.

#289/June '07. Ultimo Resorte, Kursk, Masstrauma, Social Circkle, Final Approach, Post Punk Kitchen, Southern Death Cult, Portland Drummers, Timisoara, Copenhagen, and Pampanga scene reports.

#290/July '07. Stormcrow, Merkit, Solid Decline, Monster Squad, Sex Vid, Vivisick, Warkrime, Top Ten, *We're Gonna Fight* zine, White Cross, Berlin scene report.

#291/August '07. *MRR* 25th Anniversary Issue. Martin Sprouse, Tim Yohannon, No Slogan, Ruidosa Inmundicia, Chinese Telephones, Vaseline Children, Anfi-System, Dave Roche, 6-page retrospective photo-spread, Kawakami/ Disclose obituary, Brazil scene report.

#292/September '07. New Bloods, Chronic Seizure, Outraged, Geriatric Unit, Active Distribution, Gruk, The Mods, No Defences, The Fakes, Trashies Tour Report, Mexico scene report.

#293/October '07. Punk and Immigration Theme issue w/ interviews, articles, and stories. Anti-You, Loser Life, Political Asylum, Olympia scene report.

#294/November '07. The Hipshakes, Neverending Party, Punk & Immigration article, Finally Punk, La Lucha Para La Justicia en Guatemala, Leftover Crack, AOA.

#295/December '07. Surrender, What If Gods Lie?. The Crawlers, 2:20, The Joneses, Libertario Magazine, Bad Samaritans, Shrapnel, Untermensch.

#296/January '08. Hellshock, Mario Panciera, Anathema, The System, Eddy Current Suppression Ring, The Voids, Cinecyde, Kyklooppien Sukupuutto, Punch In The Face, BSA.

#297/February '08. Marie Kanger-Born, Thrillhouse Records, Contaminators, Oi Polloi, Obstruction, I Walk the Line, Utopia

#298/March '08. Best of 2007, Autistic Youth, White Lung, Karma Sutra, Clusterfuck, Sharon Cheslow, Slaughter of the Innocent.

#299/April '08. Government Warning, Age, Off With Their Heads, Guided Cradle, Go It Alone, Fy Fan, Daily Void, Hungarian Scene history.

#300/May '08. NorCal Punk Special: Fix My Head, Black Rainbow, Tank Crimes, Young Offenders, Church Police, Traditional Fools, Six Weeks/Short Fast & Loud, Ecoli.

#301/June '08. Underground Railroad to Candyland, Straightjacket Nation, Red Dons, Spectres, Dean Dirg, Kola, Los Violadores, the Sears, Tentacles of Destruction, Antibodies, Head on Collision.

#302/July '08. Giuda, Wasted Time, Reality, Sin Orden, Teenage Head, Antidote, La Urss, Canadian Rifle, Seasick, Israel & Japan scenes.

#303/August '08. Double Negative, Burnt Cross, Masapunk, Chicago Clitfest, Intifada, Nuclear Death Terror, Raw Power, Unlovables, Waste, Chaos In Tejas photospread, Houston and Grand Rapids scene reports.

#304/September '08. Raymond Pettibon, John Stabb of Government Issue, Cola Freaks, Measure [sa], The Press, XYX, Simply Saucer, Kulturkampf, Andy T, FPO, and Columbia scene report.

#305 October '08. Pierced Arrows, Bum Kon, Deep Sleep, Diente Perro, IRA, Legion of Parasites, Reality Control, Riot City Records, Stations, Test Patterns.

#306 November '08. Brain Handle, Assassins, Diodes (pt. 1), 97 Shiki, Black Dove, No Bunny, Shellshag, Sista Sekunden, Vivian Girls, Animals And Men.

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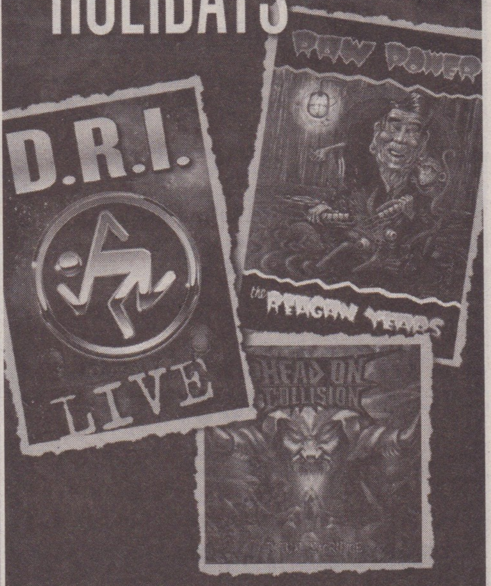

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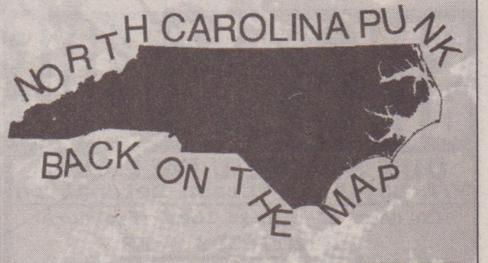

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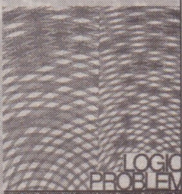

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Dear MRR and readers—

The current economic climate has made it impossible for me to run Sound Idea Distribution and the Burrito Records label as I'd like. Rather than compromise my vision, I'm putting it all to rest. Here's some information that might concern some of you.

- Sound Idea Distribution: No more mailorder or wholesale, effective Saturday, Oct. 18, 2008. All my bills have been paid and all trades have been completed. If you think I owe you something, please get in touch. If you have a credit slip, send it in for a refund or merchandise. The webpage will remain online for about a year with my contact information. For your wholesale needs, I suggest Ebullition. For mailorder, please try Dr. Strange.
- Sound Idea Store: Last day of business was Saturday, Oct. 18, 2008. Everything was on sale really cheap and the stuff that I couldn't take with me was be given away.
- Sound Idea eBay Store: The stuff in the Sound Idea eBay store will remain available. Same product, same prices, same service.
- Shows at Sound Idea: All cancelled, but I am working with a group of people to start a new all-ages venue in the Tampa area. The new venue will get my P.A. system, some of my furniture, and the remainder of the Sound Idea inventory to sell at gigs. Locals, keep your ear to the ground for details. It's up in the air now. Touring bands, we will be ready for you by December 2008.
- Sound Idea Zine Library: It is being left in full to the folks starting the new venue.
- Sound Idea Net Radio: Last broadcast was Saturday, Oct. 18, 2008. Broadcast will remain online until at least Saturday, Oct. 25, 2008. I'm going to miss doing the show. It has been my favorite part of Sound Idea for the last year or so. I have a bunch of episodes in the can that won't get posted online. If anyone is interested in the unheard episodes, get in touch and I can put them on CD for you.
- Burrito Records: All future releases on Burrito Records have been cancelled. Most of the remaining Burrito stock has been shipped to Ebullition, who will be selling it very cheap. The folks starting the new venue in Tampa will also have select Burrito titles for trade. Bands, if you want your masters or original art back, get in touch.
- *Burn Brandon* Zine and Burn Brandon Records: Locals, if you want to keep this going, it is up to you. You will still have access to my photocopier.

It's a lot for me to think about and I am still figuring out some of the details. I'm getting out of the music business but I'm not getting out of music. I'll see you at the gigs and in the record bins. I do not want to fall behind on new music, so bands and labels, feel free to keep me up to date. My phone and fax will be disconnected in October, but I will keep my PO Box and email address.

I would like to thank all of the wonderful mailorder, wholesale, and store customers who have been a huge part of my last 15-plus years. And I would like to acknowledge the hard work and dedication of my peers, especially: Al Quint, *Maximum Rocknroll*, Havoc Records, Grand Theft Audio, Ebullition, Dr. Strange, Alternative Tentacles, Get Hip, MCR Company, Prank Records, Tankcrimes, and Six Weeks.

Thanks for reading,
—Bob Suren
PO Box 3204
Brandon, FL 33509-3204
sndidea@ix.netcom.com
www.soundideadistribution.com

Bob—
All of us at MRR *are very, very sorry to hear you are closing… Sound Idea was the epitome of a well-run punk business—offering great records at fair prices, putting out records for local as well as international bands, doing all-ages shows, etc. The magazine in particular greatly appreciates your years of support in terms of advertising and distribution (never a late payment!), and it says a lot that you squared away your debts before closing the store. And I'd like to personally thank you for doing a show for my old band in the summer of 2002. (I'm sorry we were two hours late!) R.I.P. Sound Idea.*
—Chris/MRR

MRR—

Thanks to Dan for things said about the Sick Sick Sick demo CD in issue #306. I didn't include the address on the lyric sheet because I don't want weird kids coming to my house, but I did include it in the envelope I sent the CD in. Guess it got separated or something. The CD is $4 ppd, mailed to: 423 Florida Ave, New Ellenton, SC 29809.

Thanks,
—Furman/Sick Sick Sick

A response to the column "Brace Belden Is The Last Punk," Issue #305, October 2008—

You have an extremely shallow view of what it means to be punk, and you are completely ignorant in terms of parenting. Your argument that one cannot be punk and also be a parent is so outrageous and unfounded that I wonder what kind of lame punk community you are involved with. There is so much more to the "punk scene" then just going to shows, buying records, getting wasted, and being an asshole. Being punk is not just about fashion, hairstyles, and getting into fights. You desperately need to broaden your mind and educate yourself, 'cause you are completely misinformed. Being punk is also a movement, an ideology. It is about a sense of solidarity and community. A way of being and living that encompasses questioning authoritative knowledge and challenging an oppressive, fascist mentality that has been governing humanity for way to long. Although parenting can be challenging and life changing, I think more people in the punk community should have kids. You see, the conservatives and religious right and the mindless consumers should not be the only ones to raise the next generation. Yes, becoming a parent means responsibility, but one can be punk and responsible.

Every 36 seconds in America a child is abused and neglected. And this can happen even if the parents shop at Baby Gap and dress their kids in yellow tank tops and swim shorts. I have taken my kids to shows, albeit all ages shows at coffee shops or at friend's houses. It is very true about their eardrums being ultra sensitive; that's why when the band starts, you take them outside or have the older kids who want to see the band wear earplugs and stand away from the amps. How dare you speak of taking a child to a show as child abuse when you state "a trash can is the best place for a child"? Your language for describing a baby gestating in his/her mother's womb and being born are words of a misogynistic and a misopedist.

Yes, it is true, kids have the tendency rebel against their parents, but your belief that if parents stay punk, then their child will "end up in the Aryan nation, or a cop, or a football player, or listen to Jay-Z" on the sole grounds of the parents being a "punk" is absolutely ridiculous. I was raised by a cannabis-smoking, liberal-minded woman. She may not have always made the best decisions, but I did not turn out to be a cop or a member of the Aryan nation. However, to say I followed my mother's path would be false. I do not go to Rainbow gatherings or listen to The Grateful Dead; my musical tastes are quite diverse, as is my seven-year-old. He happens to like the Subhumans and The Cure and White Zombie and Bob Marley. Being a punk parent does not mean that your child has to be everything punk. I never gave my boys Mohawks or dressed them in Ramones t-shirts. And the green hair my oldest sometimes has is his choice, as it is his choice to have his hair long or short. If he doesn't want to go to a show that is suitable for him, then we don't go. If he does not want to go to a rally with me, then he doesn't go, and if I can't find someone to watch him, then I don't go. I am thankful that I can raise my children in a community of like-minded people. I am glad that I have friends that are "punk" and are parents. Family potlucks are a blast! The support we punk parents give each other and the love we have for our children has way more meaning then your narcissistic lifestyle. The loathing you seem to have is completely misdirected.

—Dustee, punk mom of two boys

MRR—

I just finished issue #305 and I have two quick things.

1. Brace Belden made a really good point in that you can't be punk and a parent. So, after I threw my daughter in a trashcan, I went and got my dick pierced. Up the punx!

2. After the Bum Kon interview you created a little advertisement for *MRR* merch and you featured the coved of the famous 25¢ bin Tawas City, Michigan (population 2500—yes, two thousand and five hundred people) band, Afterbirth. For those readers that enjoy truly horrible records, like me, then you really should pick this up. With this 1988 classic, you get the smashing hits "Mr. Louis," "You're the Cheese," "Cool Tavern," and three more!

Tony Party—out

MRR—

So, in issue #305, I saw two guest columns—one from John from the band Merkit, and the other from Brace who I think is in a band called Warkrime. I first read John's and it was so uplifting to read this in *MRR*. Just a good positive column that made me want to go out and do something. It made me want to stand up and be a punk rocker and do something for my community and myself. It's columns like this that create a spark in us to do something. Then after that, I read the column by Brace, who just rambled on with words he didn't know how to use and baby-like shouts about how punk is dead and blah blah blah. Thankfully, at this point I was still coming off John's column so I was feeling pretty good. I am already burned on the huge crop of bands playing the "don't think, just play" style of hardcore. Some say it's an '80s revival thing, but I love '80s HC punk and they have some the best words ever written.

So, this month I noticed that good old Brace had a column—so good for him. Just when I thought the 300 churches or cops spraying mace in my face wasn't negative enough, I got some fucking little brat talking about shit that he can't even come close to relating to. I have been reading *MRR* for probably as long as that Brace kid has been alive and it has always given me this uplifting feel. Every month I get it and sit down and read it and am inspired to do something, anything. I understand why Brace is in and John is not this month—Brace gets letters like this and people will tune in next week to see what he will say. Wait a minute, is this Fox News or *MRR*??

Well, either way I love *MRR*, but I have seen a lot of the writers coming from the same angle and the same writing style. It's kinda snobby and it's kinda uninspiring. Some have come that have great columns and great things to say, but for the most part it's more of the same. I know in the past you have people like Brace come and go, and I understand not everything has to be happy and super positive—I just don't need it. Today's world is enough to want to put a gun to your head. For me, everyday is a negative climb to try and lead some kind of positive life. Just like the great band Conquest For Death said, positive attitude, negative world. "The entire punk scene is dead, punk sucks, this sucks, you suck"—I see this every day in this apathetic world we live in, I don't need it in the pages of this mag also. Who the hell can even say punk is dead? Some kid in some basement is blasting a killer punk record right now because he had a fucking shitty day, and being a punk rocker makes him feel a little better about life, so fuck you to anybody telling me I don't feel what I feel.

I hope people like John become columnists in *MRR* because for me it was a breath of fresh air—something new, something different. Also, John brings the fact that he lives Florida not the Bay Area—a whole different way of life. Also, the range of bands he will talk about will be something new and refreshing that *MRR* really, really, really needs. Thanks to people like Paul Curran, Jessica Mills, Golnar, and many others who still or used to write and I always look forward to read. I don't want flowers and candy, happy hippie bullshit. I am just at a point with the society around me that I need every punk/freak/fag/weirdo around working together, because face it, we have some real shitty people in the world these days. Other thanks to *MRR* for still being around after all this time.

—Ryan Punx
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Grand Rapids, MI 49501
punksbeforeprofits@hotmail.com

Ryan—

Thanks for writing. Your points are well taken; I'd just like to offer a few of my own. I agree wholeheartedly with you on the importance of positive, inspiring writing in Maximum. *I've noticed a general trend in the punk scene over the last several years towards apathy and apolitical (or anti-political) mindsets. (Of course, some of this can be attributed to the insincerity and self-serving righteousness of a small number of overzealous punks in years past—the '90s, anyone?—but that's a whole 'nother letter/column/can of worms.) I like John's attitude and willingness to call people on their shit, and I'm glad that he's continued to send us writing. He's a good voice to have in the magazine, for sure. However—and you are welcome to disagree with me on this—I would undoubtedly say the same thing about Brace as well. To think of his column as some attention-grabbing shock-value whine-fest is to miss the point. Sure, some of it may (or may not) be tongue-in-cheek, and he definitely seems to like to push people's buttons, but that's as much a part of punk rock as political awareness/activism, in my opinion. He may be critical of punk, but punk is as open to criticism as anything else. Besides, Brace doesn't just sit around complaining "about shit that he can't even come close to relating to"—he plays*

in a punk band, does his own zine (besides writing for MRR*), and goes to more shows than practically anyone I can think of. The guy loves punk. I may not agree with everything he writes, but I'd say the same thing about John's writing. What I like about both of them, and why both of them deserve to be represented in* MRR*, is that they're opinionated motherfuckers. Being one yourself, maybe you can see where I'm coming from.*
—Chris

MRR—

There's something that always bothers me about bands that don't stand behind the songs they write. Recently when my band was on tour in Minneapolis, MN we met up with Ben from the band In Defence. We asked him where a good place to eat in the area was, and he took us to a pizza place. For those familiar with In Defence's songs, they have a militant anti-pizza stance. See their song, "All Hail the Taco Avenger," in which they state that "Tacos rule / Pizza sucks." I urge any good pizza-loving punx to boycott In Defence and Give Praise Records!
—Jeff DeSantis

Dear Steve & MRR—

Re: your letter on Black Metal and punk from October 2008 issue (#305), you wrote "my vote is to keep black metal out of *MRR* all together, not just because it has nothing to do with punk, but because the whole scene is shady."

First off, "nothing to do with punk" is weird. Apparently you haven't been to a Ludicra show. They've played Gilman a lot and their drummer used to play in Hickey—a band who I'm sure a lot of *MRR* readers have supported. While Ludicra has received some coverage in *Terrorizer* and a few other big metal mags, they still operate on a generally punk/DIY basis. They're not "pure black metal" to some (but really who cares?), but they still have a strong influence from the genre. They have zero pretense and aren't "shady" whatsoever. Plus, I was at the DNA checking out the Embers, Saros, Nachmystium, Wolves in the Throne Room show the other night. All night there were punks *and* metalheads headbangin' alongside each other. Kelly and Steve from Embers used to play in the hardcore band Lesser of Two.

Also, there's a ton of punk influence in Darkthrone. Fenriz is a huge fan of Adrenaline OD and World Burns To Death, et. al. There's also Carpathian Forest (yes, their lyrics are as dumb as G.G.'s, but *MRR*'s reviewed plenty of G.G. stuff), Dishammer (Discharge and Hellhammer) and plenty more.

Furthermore, the "having nothing to do with punk" doesn't make sense considering the history of the genre. The progenitors—Venom, Bathory, and Hellhammer—were all influenced by punk/hardcore along with hard rock and metal. Namely, Discharge and Oi! bands along with KISS, 'Maiden and Motörhead. I've been going to tons of punk/metal/underground music shows since 1989. The punk ideas and ethics are what got me more interested in looking for bands outside the "rock 'n' roll bullshit" of arena shows and what was going on in *Hit Parader* and MTV.

Really, "the whole scene"? Black metal's all over the place nowadays, musically and politically. Musically, you have everything from the blasting bombast of Deathspell Omega to the WTF-ery of Lugubrum to the doom of Nortt. A lot of it's apolitical, often filled with the usually satanic/Nietzche posturing (see Gorgoroth, Watain) but more recently there's eco/left-leaning Wolves in the Throne Room and the anarcho-rippers Iskra. I'm very aware of the National Socialist black metal crap. I've debated/discussed its worth with Steve, the metal buyer at Amoeba SF, and with Andee, the owner of Aquarius Records.

Also, to clarify, the band I Shalt Become was previously called Birkenau. However, none of their work itself has been political. Sometimes, black metal and other metal bands use Holocaust-related titles and imagery just to convey "brutality." In a way this is no different from a lot of the atrocity photos on crust and D-beat covers. However, I Shalt Become's association with the National Socialist black metal fronted Darker Than Black label, run by neo-Nazi/murderer Hendrik Mobus of Absurd, is something people should be aware of. Mobus' connections to the National Alliance is also significant to this label's story. Regardless, I *don't* want these idiots defining black metal any more than I want One Life Crew and Skrewdriver defining hardcore and punk. None of the major punk and metal subgenres can be nailed down by one set of ideas and or one subset of bands.

I'd advise anyone interested in the background of this stuff to check out the paper I'm presenting in Austria at the "Metal, Music and Politics" conference titled: "Extreme Metal and Extreme Politics: Strange Bedfellows or Fellow Travelers?" posted here: http://hordesofhesh.blogspot.com
Thanks,
—Ragnar
Metal Director
KZSU-FM, Stanford

Dear MRR—

Hi everybody, how are you? There is one issue I would like to address. Unfortunately, this personal and private matter must be discussed in a public forum and with a month separating accusation and defense. Perhaps I'm getting ahead of myself.

Imagine my surprise when recently, while at home, putting in order my sundry things, each room receiving due diligence, I made a discovery. The dining room. Did you read last month's issue? Smashed under a pile of *Kerrangs*, *Hit Paraders*, *Circuses*, and *Creems*, I found a crinkly interloper. A realization. I hadn't read last month's issue.

Our group, Brain Handle, is from a natural city. Our group, Brain Handle, advocates peace with nature and our fellow persons, in the form of communal living. With heavy heart I chose to leave Maple Leaf, 2x4, Robble Robble, and Secret BOGO, but my tenure at Egg Station Zero has left me re-centered and I believed it would be time for our group, Brain Handle, to, in harmony, ride again. Or?

I have been called many things. I have been called Eggs, the Egg Man, and the Genghis Egg. I have been called Peppered Eggs, Eggman the Horrible, and One Dozen Eggs. I have been called Bottled Eggs. I have been called the Egg of Time. Unpleasantness has also been spat my way. I have been called a bastard. I have been called trash, a son of a bitch, excrement, and worse. I have been called an angel. In a letter printed in last month's issue of *this* publication, I have been called a dumbass. And now I have been called late.

My tardiness seems hardly an issue for these pages. I ask myself how, after gulping beer mixed with ash, after a high speed rock 'n' roll riot house complete with shitter sliding from town to town, after raising the sun from the Atlantic and drowning it in the Pacific unleashing a hell of sound the whole way between, could this be?

Practice is all time. Practice is within and without. The egg is an imperfect circle but, so blemished, provides life or sustains it. The last letter asked "Eggs, what's got into you?" Nothing that has not been in all of us, always.
PE(gg)ACE(gg),
—Eggs

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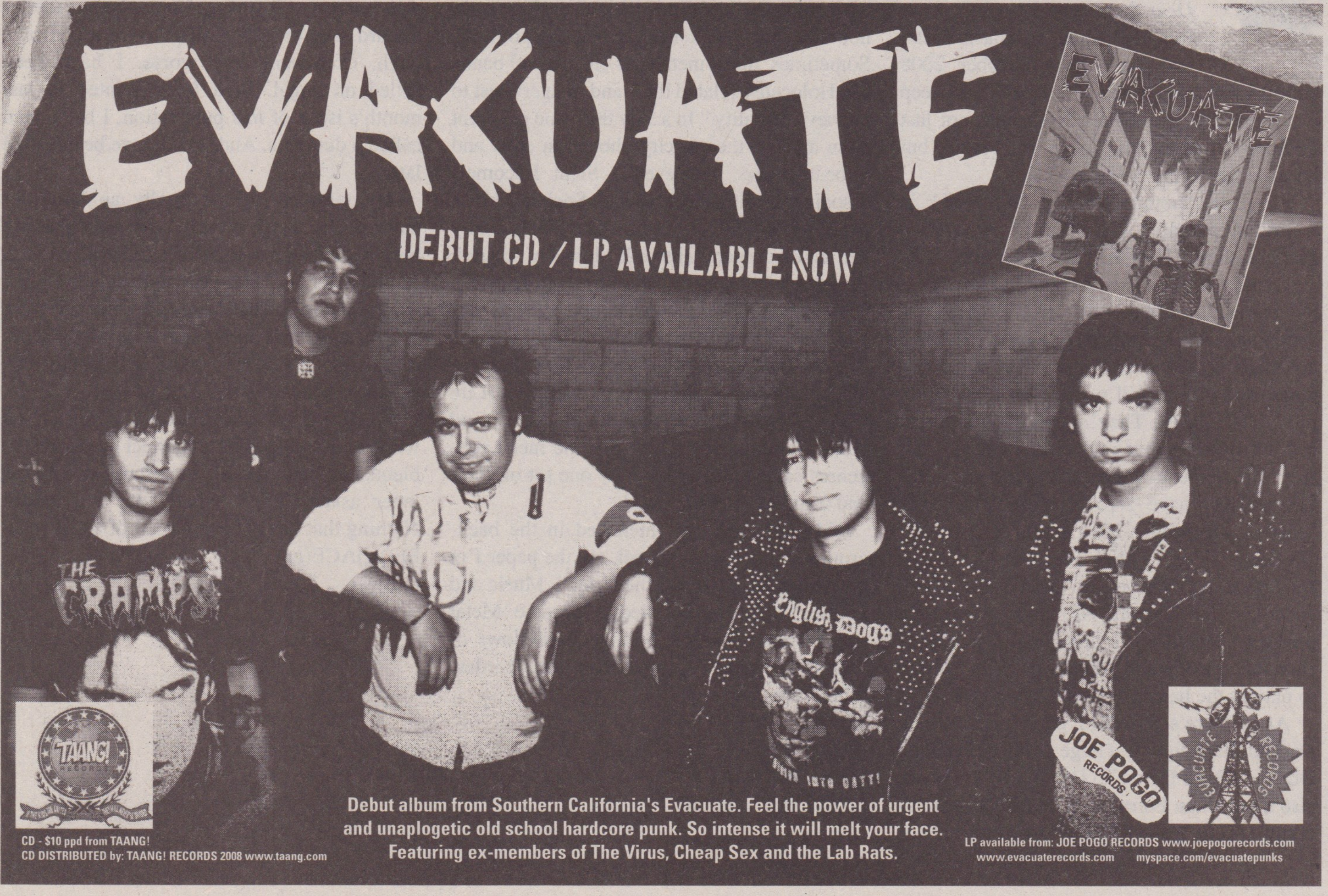

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COLUMNS

I've been waiting for two hours to turn in my food stamp application and talk with this, the gatekeeper of social services. She wades through and confirms all of my information line by line: name, address, Social Security number.

She looks like uncannily like Teresa Covarrubias from the East LA punk band The Brat. I know it isn't her, but can't help but think of her as some other punk turned social worker (probably the fate of more than a few punks), working for the state and serving the public. Doesn't seem like a bad gig either. I know more than a few punk teachers who love it, and I read somewhere that Exene is a librarian.

Feeling warm toward her, as an imaginary punk, I interrupt to ask her name. I feel like it's the polite thing—she knows who I share food with so I might as well ask her name. But she is awkwardly surprised and skeptical. She stares at me for a moment, and then says, "Just call me 'lady.'"

I feel momentary embarrassment for crossing some kind of unspoken line, but we are right back to my application, moving forward as if I never said a word to her. She is inputting my information into her computer when we hit the stumbling block. Ethnicity.

It will only let me check one.

"I'm pretty sure at least one of the forms said 'check all that apply' for that portion," I say, shifting from foot to foot on tired legs.

She is still staring at the screen, brows furrowed, not hearing me. "I just don't know what you do in this case."

Looking around the room at all the people, thinking of the volume of people this woman has assisted, I could not imagine I was her first mixed person. It seemed a statistical impossibility. An involuntary flush began rising in my cheeks. I've been waiting a long time; I'm tired and, well, hungry.

"This doesn't affect how much I get in benefits right? Can we just check 'other' or something? What do people usually check?" I ask, hoping this doesn't take longer than it has to.

"They pick one, sometimes they say you are supposed to side with the mother. But it is self-identifying."

"What happens if I don't want to pick?" I ask, starting to feel like I just want to leave.

"The county will do it for you," she says matter-of-factly, looking up at me.

So much for self-identifying.

As of the 2000 census, the county where I live—Alameda County—had 1,443,741 people living in it, of which 5.63 percent were of two or more races. Even with statistics almost a decade old, Alameda county had somewhere in the neighborhood of 81,000 mixed race people, and still Social Services has no way easy way to categorize them? The "mark all that apply" option is usually the best in terms of inclusion, so why not make it so in their internal system? Why this checkbox category system to begin with?

Sure, for Social Services, the need to collect data is understandable. They are trying to answer pragmatic questions: Which communities are underrepresented and in need of more outreach? Are there languages other than the ones they are offering that they need to hire translators for? Etc. ... etc.

But if their forms aren't dynamic enough to really represent people, isn't the data flawed to begin with? If people simply have to choose one, won't our understanding of others and ourselves stay as stagnant as the forms we must fill out?

The human impulse to categorize isn't limited to race/ethnicity. It's in gender, sexuality, class, and for many, the fewer categories the better. For a long time the dominant paradigm saw the world as such: man/woman, straight/queer, white/not-white, rich/poor, Christian/godless, good/bad. Things have certainly gotten more complicated, but instead of understanding that the system of categorization was the problem, we have simply added more categories. As if there could ever be enough categories to explain or encompass what we really are.

Sometimes trying to rephrase our category to be more positive—something we can own, but even that isn't all that empowering. It also has a tendency to reinforce the idea that you are born with certain characteristics, and that they do not and cannot change over time. That your sexuality cannot vary and shift and grow with age, that your gender cannot also be ebbing and flowing more toward one end of the spectrum or another across your lifetime. We are made to choose, and when we choose, we are expected to stay. Like good dogs.

It's usually only those who fall between or outside of these categories who see them for the human inventions they really are.

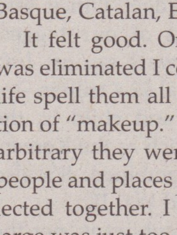
"Lady" surprises me with a personal aside, but it's almost like she is speaking to herself. "My husband is from Ukraine, and my family is Mexican and Filipino. My children are mixed too. It seems silly that they won't know what to check. Okay, I know what to do. I want you to check 'other,' but we are going to write everything in the margin, and I will input it in the comments and show to my boss."

She handed me a stubby little pencil and I wrote as small as I could in the margin. In alphabetical order: Apache (Junimano), Basque, Catalan, English, Scottish, Yaqui.

It felt good. Once the need to categorize was eliminated I could for the first time in my life spell them all out. One by one, each portion of "makeup." As soon as I had, I felt how arbitrary they were. Little pieces of the past: people and places no longer remembered, collected together. I had thought the world at large was just too lazy to understand, and for my whole life, even I had labeled myself in order to make it simpler for others to understand. Now it seemed like just stories about people no longer remembered, with no real ties to my life.

I crossed out my little list and wrote: "fuck you" below it.

When I handed it back to her, Lady laughed, and dutifully typed: "fuck you" into the comments field. Maybe she was a little bit punk after all.



RALL DEAL

Credit has dried up. The stock market is disintegrating. Unless someone pours money into capital markets, everyone agrees, we could wind up like people in Baghdad, fondly remembering the day five years ago when they pushed the handle and their toilets still flushed. Only one "someone" has enough cash to fix the problem: the US government.

The Bush administration and congressional democrats want taxpayers to pay $700 billion to bail out failing banks. Progressives would prefer to bail out homeowners facing the imminent foreclosure of their homes—as well as those in danger of being foreclosed upon during 2009—at a cost of $1.3 trillion.

Never mind which approach is better. Where will the government find the money?

There are two elephants in the room: war and Bush's 2001 and 2003 tax cuts. We can't afford either. Yet, to abuse the animal metaphor, everyone acts like they're sacred cows.

When you think about it, it's sheer madness. The city marshal is at the door brandishing a shotgun, ready to evict you and your family for nonpayment of rent. But while your kids are screaming in terror, you're at the computer, wasting thousands on online gambling. You could pay off your landlord instead. You could make the marshal go away. All you have to do is stop. But you keep on keeping on. Click, click. More money squandered.

What the hell is wrong with you? What the hell is wrong with us? In 2007 the nonpartisan Congressional Budget Office estimated that the final cost of our biggest national compulsion, the wars against Iraq and Afghanistan, could total $2.4 trillion—or $8,000 per man, woman and child in the country. That's twice as much as the Korean, Vietnam and Gulf Wars combined. It's also two-thirds the cost of World War II.

Yet no one—not the Republicans, not the Democrats, not the media, not even the left—insists that we get out.

To paraphrase Lloyd Bentsen, I've studied World War II. World War II was a worthwhile war, one that freed millions from tyranny and set the stage for the US to dominate the global economy and become the wealthiest nation in history. Iraq and Afghanistan? They're no World War II. As wars go, they're not as worthwhile as the invasion of Grenada.

"The CBO estimates assume that 75,000 troops will remain in both countries through 2017, including roughly 50,000 in Iraq," reported *USA Today*. If anything, that's a lowball estimate. More than a half century after the fighting ceased, we still have 37,000 troops in one tiny country, South Korea. And both McCain and Obama promise to send more troops to Afghanistan. That means more taxpayer money.

Nearly two out of three Americans think invading Iraq—where the lion's share of war funding is being spent—was a mistake. The Afghan resistance is kicking our butts. Both wars have been a complete, total waste of money, effort and lives. As surely as the sun will rise in the east, we will lose both—at a total cost of at least $2.4 trillion. Ridiculous.

That is nearly twice the $1.3 trillion it would take to save every home in danger of foreclosure. That would keep many banks afloat, and act as the biggest economic stimulus in history. Can anyone sane tell us why we shouldn't bring our troops back home? Can anyone justify wasting $2.4 trillion at a time when the US economy is staring into the abyss of total collapse?

The other national obsession is the tax cuts Bush pushed through in 2001 and 2003. "The surplus is not the government's money," Bush said at the time, apparently unaware that the economy was already in a recession. "The surplus is the people's money." Remember surpluses? Such a Clintonian word.

Anyway, Democrats in Congress—still in full-on wuss mode following 9/11—went along with Bush's tax cuts. But, bless their wimpy little heads, they did manage to extract a concession: In 2011, tax rates would revert to what they'd been in 2001.

Believe a Republican once, shame on you. Believe a Republican twice, what were you thinking? Now so-called conservatives are complaining that "the largest tax increase in history" will occur in 2011 if Bush's tax cuts are allowed to expire.

Making the Bush tax cuts permanent would codify the most regressive tax change in history. "After-tax income would increase by more than six percent for households in the top one percent of the nation's income distribution, two percent for households in the middle 60 percent, and only 0.3 percent for households in the bottom twenty percent," according to a Brookings Institution study.

Making the rich richer will cost the Treasury an arm, a leg, and the better part of a torso.

"Combined with a minimal but necessary fix to the government's Alternative Minimum Tax, making the tax cuts permanent would reduce federal revenues by almost $1.8 trillion over ten years—and that's in addition to the $1.7 trillion of revenue losses already locked into law."

Again, allow me to remind you: $1.3 trillion is the amount we need to stave off imminent financial catastrophe.

That sound you hear is the door breaking down. The marshal is coming down the hall. Get off the computer. Fix the problem. Get out of Iraq and Afghanistan. Let the tax cuts expire.

Contact: www.rall.com

Världskrig
Nick Mangel

I have gotten a bunch of stuff from various distros recently, particularly stuff that is D-beat or Swedish-influenced, but not from Sweden. So that's kind of a theme this month, but there will be some tangents into other areas of course.

I got a bunch of Southeast Asian stuff from my amigo Abri at BROEDERKONT RECORDS, who has some awesome stuff in his distro by the way. He's on MySpace!

There is a new crop of heavy, Scandinavian inspired D-beat crust. SKULLKRUSHER *Darkness Falls* CD is a shining example of this new wave, and is completely, well, krushing! There are definitely tons of Swedish influences here, but also some Japanese ones, and even some DISRUPT in there I believe. BLACK SEEDS RECORDS from Ireland has been releasing some beautiful CDs of SE Asian bands—particularly Malaysian and Singaporean bands, so check that out for sure (Black Seeds Records, 32 Clarendon Hall, Aungier St., Dublin 2 Ireland).

Another label that has been releasing a ton of awesome punk and crust from this part of the world is AZADGHEI RECORDS, who I don't know as much about but who has an impressive discography already. A good introduction is the *V/A Singapore Punk Holocaust* CD with bands MINUS, HATRED JACKALS, BLINDED HUMANITY and DISTRUST. I am familiar with two of these bands and the others are new to me.

MINUS is the longest running band aside from OPPOSITION PARTY I know of in Singapore. They have morphed a bit from a sort of anarcho punk/street punk hybrid into a fairly solid UK crust punk band with a snotty attitude! They do have Swedish influences as well as some DISORDER and CHAOS UK! DISTRUST is another long running crust/punk act with ENT, DOOM, and DISRUPT influences for sure, so there is a grindy edge there too.

BLINDED HUMANITY is new to me but play devastating Japanese style HC/thrash! Total Crasher Crusties!! HATRED JACKALS play a fairly straightforward variety of anarcho peace punk with some crusty hints. Awesome compilation really! (AZADGHEI, hasib_crusty@hotmail.com)

While we are on the topic of MINUS, we have to mention the new CD by these guys. MINUS' *Minus Rage* CD, which is on TRIBAL

WAR, which I wasn't really sure was still active these days. It's great to see that they are on course, and releasing SE Asian crust punk no less This is a collaboration with their TRIBAL WAR ASIA wing. Awesome classic '90s style crust punk! (Tribal War 1951 W Burnside #1936, PDX, OR 97209)

As I have been saying, this frightening new crap of Malaysian and Singaporean bands has really churned out some amazing stuff. One of my favorites is the GENERAL ENEMY *Mass Destruction* CD. Dark, bleak, pissed off, and heavy is the best way to describe these guys! Total D-beat meets darkened or blackened crust. I mean that, to me, is just perfect MUSICK! (Also on AZADGHEI RECORDS.)

Ok, so a slight tangent here: MEANWHILE is from Sweden, but their 7" has been burnin' up my turntable. MEANWHILE's *Ghostface Democracy* 7" is full of shorter, but no less intense pummeling Swedish D-beat in the classic sense. (On Finland's FIGHT RECORDS! www.kolumbus.fi/fight)

HELLBOMBS/HELLEXIST split CD, yep its total hell! You better believe it. I had never heard of either of these bands, although with names like that it is pretty clear what you are going to be dealing with. HELLBOMBS are of the crust/grind variety that made Singapore famous (at least in my demented mind) in the late '90s. ENT, DOOM, HIATUS, NAPALM DEATH influences. Crust-core with intense political lyrics! HELLEXIST, are more on the simply crusty end of things without the grindy edge. I have to say I prefer the more straight up crust myself. Awesome artwork and a 7" size sleeve for this CD, which drives some people bonkers but I'm not complaining. This is released by BROKEN NOISE RECORDS, who have been around for quite some time, and is also associated with the band PARKINSON. (Broken_noise@yahoo.com)

FULL OF HATRED/DISKONTROLL 7" just came out on the SVAVELDIOXID label and is pretty damn amazing. DISKONTROLL come from Sao Paulo, Brazil and play some gritty, dirty raw ass D-beat! Perfect Swedish influenced Brazilian terror! FULL OF HATRED is from Italy, and I got into a bit less, and is of the thrash or fast hardcore ilk with more US influences.

Also in the MINUS camp is the MINUS/OBSCENE split CD! These tracks by MINUS may be a bit older because they have some pogo-punk influence for sure! OBSCENE I had never heard of but play more roots, pogo punk with crust influence—which is sort of paradoxical in my mind but somehow it works! Also on the delightful BROKEN NOISE!

One of the less common CD-only Swedish D-beat releases (no judgments here!) is the DISCOVER *Stench of Death* CD. These drunks from southern Sweden play booze fueled D-beat with gruff vocals, but they do have a DISORDER edge to them and some CHAOS UK in there too, probably because it gets a little sloppy from time to time. But hey that's booze baby. BLACK SEEDS!

And here is something neither SE Asian nor Norse: NAKOT/DYSPNEA split 7". NAKOT is from Belgrade, ex-Yugo, and play some harsh dark crust punk with grisly vocals—quite well done. Less coherent is DYSPNEA, who is from Greece. Like their other crusty countrymen they play dark and somewhat atmospheric crust at a slower pace, although their songs get kind of muddled. Somehow I would like to hear a full length (or just more tracks) from them to try to better understand what they are trying to do, because I think it could be very cool. (www.geocities.com/wedontfightit)

Another fine international cooperation is the KURWA APARATA/CO-ARSE split CD. KURWA APARATA has had a few splits floating around and plays some tough, hard drinking D-beat! KA is from Austria, and I also see some Japanese influence there. CO-ARSE, from the Philippines, have actually been around for a while and play raw, Swedish influenced D-beat and even do covers of DISSOBER, SVARTSMALT, and SEVERED HEAD OF STATE (!). On a Singaporean label! (www.basementrecordstore.com)

I don't think I have had a chance to mention one of my favorite zines out there, *Agitate*! Chris is a pal from way back when, and he is out with his incredible *Agitate* #9. This issue has DISSYSTEMA, WAR CRIMES, and AFTER THE BOMBS, as well as news, reviews, etc. Total '90s style international crust zine that makes me salivate. Beautiful black and white cut and paste layout to show up all the glossy types! (PO BOX 202 Shipley BD18 3WB UK)

As far as non-musick stuff I have been getting into Western movies lately. I am not sure why as I have generally had no interest in that genre, but some of the old spaghetti Westerns are pretty amazing, as well as Peckinpah's stuff. *The Wild Bunch* remains one of the best Westerns ever made. I have also been getting into '70s Italian crime films/Poliziotteschi, like *Street Law* and other Franco Nero films. The non-stop action and over the top violence keeps your attention and makes today's action movies look tame and slow.

Might I also recommend the new hardback release of *Creepy* comics, issues one through five on Dark Horse. *Creepy* is awesome late '60s/early '70s magazine-sized horror comics—very gritty and with great art. Let's hope they keep releasing more and I can get rid of my original copies!

That is about it for me this time! The GATT/BLACK HOLE OF CALCUTTA split 7" is out now. GATT is from Indonesia and play brutal crust, and BHOC is from Chico, CA and play intense thrashcore! Four dollars ppd to me! SCUM NOISE LP still out—$12 ppd!

Nick Daniels PO BOX 18884 Oakland, CA 94619
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George Tabb sez
Take my life, please!

"Should we take the Manhattan or the Williamsburg Bridge?" I ask Evan from the back seat of his black Thunderbird. This is a few years back.

Up front he is driving, and seated next to him is our old friend, Mykel Board, who recently returned from Mongolia, where he did god knows what.

"We're closer to the Manhattan, so we'll take that," explains Evan, my then bass player and friend who couldn't clean his car if his life depended on it. I was seated on piles of McDonalds wrappers, New Jersey free magazines with sexy metal chicks on the cover, and half empty packages of Cheese Combos.

"The Williamsburg may be more direct," says Mykel.

We both look at him and say nothing. After being in Mongolia for like two years, we know that what ever he has to say is filtered through a brain and body that has survived without door-knobs, toilet paper, and HBO. But he did tell us that he ate yaks. We wonder what else he did with them.

We wind up taking The Manhattan, get lost for a short while in Brooklyn, and then find the brownstone we are looking for. The brownstone where my pal Marc, who used to be in Letch Patrol and Iron Prostate with me, is having his bachelor party. A week before he is to be married. To a girl named Eve. Who is the sweetest thing in the world? We're all kinda jealous.

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We climb the snow-covered stairs of the building to find a note saying we should go to the ground level entrance and ring the bell. We do. Over and over. There is no answer, but we hear loud music and voices. Soon it starts to snow harder and harder, and we begin to kick on the door. Neighbor's lights go on. Finally the door opens.

"Hi," I say to some blonde guy who looks totally straight with his button up shirt, and hair parted on the side, "We're Marc's friends. I'm George, this is Evan, and that's Mykel".

The guy looks at us like we are from Mars. Then he yells, "Hey Marc, some friends of yours are here. They look like they're from the city."

I begin to wonder if Brooklyn is actually part of the city. The guy invites us in.

"You guys can put your coats on the bed and then join us upstairs," says our host.

Evan and Mykel take off their overcoats, but I keep my leather jacket on. I'm punk rock.

"You can take off your jacket if you want," says the guy, "It'll be safe."

I explain to him that I like to wear my leather jacket, and that I'm punk rock. He just looks at me and cocks his head in a weird position.

We make our way upstairs and see lots of guys standing around in a kitchen smoking cigars and drinking imported beer. I see Marc from across the room, run over to him, give him a hug, and congratulate him. He hugs me back and thanks me. I truly am happy for the guy. He's my pal. I love him.

After Marc and I talk for a few moments I take a good look around the apartment where this bachelor party is taking place. In the kitchen, where I am, is a bunch of booze. I mean, lots of it. In like big bottles. There's vodka, rum, whiskey, gin, and mixers. Like stuff to make Piña Coladas, sour drinks, and Mud slides, whatever the fuck that is. The Mud Slide mix is from TGIF's. Whatever.

Also in the kitchen is a lot of food. Placed all over the place on plates on tables. But it's food I don't recognize. At all. There are these rolled up things that are brown and white. There are these slimy eyeball shaped objects in a bowl. Then there are bowls full of slime that looks like diarrhea. The kind ya get when it mixes with lots of fluid. The Hershey Squirts.

"Carlos," I say to Marc's good friend who organized this whole thing, "here's my twenty bucks, now where's the real food?"

Marc overhears me and cuts into the conversation.

"George," he begins to explain, with a big fat cigar in his hand, "this food here is Greek. Cultured. Just what you need."

He leads me over to the rolled up things that are brown and white.

"This here is Greek Pizza," he says, as he picks up one of them for me. I take a bite out of it and it tastes like that crap on Sixth Street. I spit out a leaf.

"And this," he says as he scoops up some diarrhea on a piece of pita bread, "is hummus." I taste it. It's not bad. But not great.

I tell Marc that his choice of food is excellent. I say this cause he works in "The Food Industry." I'm lying of course. He should have had hamburgers. Hot dogs. Pizza. Ten-foot subs. For Christ's sake, this was a bachelor party, not a fucking Tupperware party. I want real food when I drink and watch porn. Not this pussy shit. But I'm nice. The guy is my friend. And he was getting married. And besides, I wasn't that hungry after being in Evan's car, anyway.

The other room, next to the kitchen, is like the living room. In there are a bunch of guys smoking cigars and listening to Black Sabbath. And watching sports on television. Again, I don't recognize most of the guys, except for a few that I've been in bands with. And they stick out like sore thumbs. Everyone else looks like totally normal. Like from the Midwest, or the South, or something. Buttoned up shirts or clean t-shirts, and nice jeans or slacks and stuff. What the hell was wrong with these people?

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Eventually, I pour myself a drink, vodka and Cranberry, The Punk Rock Juice, according to The Blanks 77, and make my way to the television where Mykel and Evan are sorting through a pile of porno tapes someone brought to the party.

"Whatcha guys got?" I ask them.

"We got straight video, fun video, and the animal porn," says Mykel.

"Animal porn!" Evan and I say at the same time.

Mykel finds a video and pops it in. The first thing we see is a dog getting a blowjob from two chicks with large breasts. The video looks like it was made in the sixties. I think the dog's haircut gives that away.

"Ewww," says a bunch of guys with cigars in their mouths. But not me and Evan and Mykel.

"You're right," says Mykel, to everyone, "We have to build up to this."

He pops the animal porn tape out of the VCR, and puts another in. We see a guy and girl fucking. Everyone breathes a bit easier. I get bored, and wander into the kitchen to get more booze. And to stare at the funny looking food.

About a half hour later, the straight porno tape ends, and Mykel pops in another. Again, a guy and girl together. They are kissing and he is sucking on her nipples and all that. I tell Mykel it's boring, and am about to walk away when I see the chick drop her skirt. She has a penis. Now this is more like it.

I run into the kitchen, grab a cigar, torch it up, and enjoy a half hour of chicks with dicks. So do Evan and a few other guys. They all keep saying how they'd never do that. How'd they never go down on a chick with a dick, no matter how cute she was. I figure they're lying because they are watching the television so intently.

After about four chicks with dicks, two cigars, five drinks, and about four Greek pizzas (hey, I got hungry), I ask Carlos where the "entertainment" is. He had explained to me earlier that week that he was going to hire a stripper to strip for Marc. I thought it was a nice gesture.

"She's due here at 11:30. About fifteen minutes," Carlos explains.

So Mykel pops in the animal porn. And lots of guys watch. Mykel was right. They had to build up to it.

The first segment we see is like I said before, these two women from the sixties having sex with this dog. One is blowing it while the other watches and masturbates. I get jealous of the dog. I never had a threesome.

Next up we see more dog fucking. This time this woman with sunglasses is getting it from behind from a German Shepherd. All the guys at the party are laughing and chanting for the dog to "fuck her good." Whatever. The dog appeared to be having fun. Finally, like any good porn actor, the dog pulls out, and cums on the woman's butt.

Next, two girls in nun outfits and a donkey. Donkeys have pretty big dicks, if you didn't know. They perform oral sex on the donkey, and then one girl lies on her side, and inserts the donkey's dong inside of her. The Donkey could seem to care less. As with the next scene.

Two more women and a Shetland pony. One of those mini ones. But they too have large penises. One woman enthusiastically gives head to the pony while the other French kisses it, when it's not eating grass off the ground. Then they switch places and the girl fucks it. Then, they switch again, and the other girl blows it until she gets a face full of donkey sperm. The guys in the apartment cheer.

Next up are the eels. I ask Carlos where the "entertainment" is, and he tells me he called the service, but that she is running late because her car broke down. So we watch the television.

A guy and two women have a few live eels. The guy inserts an eel into a woman's anus, and the other end of the eel into her vagina. It wriggles around. We all scream, and I feel myself get nauseous. I hate seafood. Then one of the girls takes an eel and sticks it up inside of her. All the way up. It wriggles its way out. Then she puts it in her mouth, and the other end in her friend's vagina. At that point I have to leave the room.

I return one cigar and Punk Rock Juice later to a guy getting whipped by a woman in leather. He's all tied up, and seems to be enjoying himself. Half the guys in the room have stopped paying attention, and are looking out the window, waiting for the stripper. Suddenly, the woman on the television takes out a hammer, and nails the guys balls to a ladder. Then she nails his penis to it as well. We all scream. It's scarier than a Freddie Kruger movie.

Next up on the video is this naked guy with a huge hard-on. He starts to masturbate, then takes out a doll. A baby doll. He cuts open a slit on the bottom of the doll and starts to fuck it. Suddenly, all the guys in the room start screaming that this is the grossest thing they've ever seen, and for us to take it out of the VCR. The guy was fucking a piece of plastic for God's sakes. Man. Fucking Brooklyn. Go figure. They'll watch dogs with corkscrews for dicks hump old ladies, but a guy fucking a doll? Doh.

***

So again we go back to the straight porn, and finally the entertainment arrives. With a big duffel bag and a boombox. She sets up in the middle of the living room, laying a carpet out and all.

"Hello everyone," says the stripper.

"Hello," all the guys say back, as we crowd around her to watch her act. Actually, I was kinda seated on the couch, a short distance from her. I really didn't want to see her strip. For some reason, that kind of thing always depresses me. For real.

"My name is Danger!" she exclaims.

We all say, "Hello Danger!"

She inserts a tape into the boombox and starts to dance around. She is wearing underwear, a bra, high heels, and nothing else.

"Who is the groomie?" asks Danger to the crowd.

We all look at one another. What the hell is a "groomie?"

"Who all is the groomie?" she asks again.

Evan whispers to me that she is asking for the groom. Marc.

I announce that Marc is the groom. She goes over to him, grabs his hand, and drags him to a chair she has placed in the middle of the room.

"This is where the groomie sits," she says, as she puts a cape around his shoulders, and a crown on his head.

Marc looks extremely embarrassed. I turn away, feeling for him.

"Okay groomie," she says, as the music is blaring, "I'm gonna let you smell my pussy".

At this point, Marc, completely red, gets up and walks away. We all yell for him to sit back down, but he won't. I don't blame him one bit.

Danger now looks all confused. Her groom has walked away. We sense the confusion, and elect Mykel Board as the "stand-in groomie".

The next thing we know Mykel is seated in the chair, cape on his shoulders, and crown around his neck. He has a small head.

"How many of you wanna see how big my pussy is?" asks Danger as the music continues to pulse away.

Lots of the guys raise their hands. I puff away hard on my cigar, hoping it will make me pass out so I don't have to witness what I'm about to. No such luck.

***

To be continued…

FELIX HAVOC
FIN DE SIÈCLE ANGST

Current political and economic events will probably be covered in better detail elsewhere. I would, however, like to offer a few general comments on the whole bloody mess.

Back in the day there was an MDC lyric: "Socialism for the rich, capitalism for the rest of you." In the early '80s I couldn't really figure out what that was supposed to mean. But now it's quite clear: When the elite and corporations are in trouble, the government will use public funds to bail them out. But when it comes to basic human needs like health care or housing you are on your own against market forces.

With all the socialism going on for the rich, banks, and corporations these days, government is revealed for what it has increasingly become—a vehicle for redistribution of wealth from the bottom to the top. As if the whole economic system wasn't set up in such a fashion already, the rich and powerful have wrested such control of the government and harnessed it to serve their ends as well. None of this is terribly surprising, but what does surprise me is that it all goes on in plain sight and so many people accept it with only cynicism and apathy.

Many environmental writers have argued that an economy based only on consumption and growth is ultimately not only unsustainable, but will eventually destroy us all. Gandhi famously said the world had enough resources for everyone's needs, but not everyone's greed. In that spirit, a transition to a more sustainable economy would address not only environmental but social ills. While there have been calls for a large scale transition to alternative energy, so far nothing meaningful is on the table.

In the 19th century Marx observed that under capitalism there would be a temptation to short circuit the system and create wealth purely by moving paper instruments. He argued people would forget they actually had to produce something of value to sell. While many of his theories turned out to be bunk, Marx would have been quite vindicated by things like Enron and mortgage backed securities.

In the past few years, monetization has increased greatly but is concentrated in the hands of a small elite so that enormous amounts of money have been chasing above market returns around the global financial system. Corporations have seen their values rise—not by creating new or useful products—but by shipping their operations overseas.

Alternately, many have turned to simply devouring other corporations in mergers and takeovers. The rise in values of stocks, housing, commodities, and some say art and collectibles (records even?) have all been part of a massive bubble that is now bursting. On the consumer side, people of average and below average means have been sucked into the lie of consumption and status, trying to ape the lifestyle of the super-rich on borrowed money.

You don't have to be a Buddhist or a hippie living in a yurt to know that materialism and consumption don't lead to real happiness. Yet the advertising industry and consumerism have sold millions a lifestyle that not only doesn't deliver the emotional satisfaction portrayed in the commercials—it now has to be paid back at rapacious interest rates.

Ultimately the solution is a more sustainable lifestyle and an economy that focuses on local industries serving basic needs. The corporate model has served the interests of the elite well, but it has not resulted in a higher standard of living for most of the world's people. I don't trust the government to deliver sustainability, but it is in the power of each "consumer" to make wise choices with how they spend their money and what kind of businesses and industries they support.

Now I'm going to talk about some punk records.

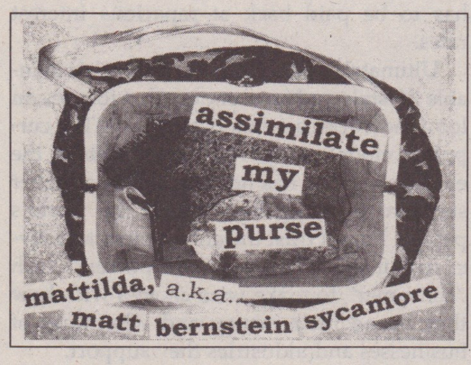
New Orleans had a surprisingly prolific punk scene in the late '70s, which some say was spawned by the Sex Pistols' legendary southern US tour. Others argue that a scene was already rising up from underground, and that the various malcontents all met up and gained new focus after the Pistols' performance.

One of my favorite records from this scene is the Normals' *Almost Ready/Hardcore 7"* on 'Lectric Eye records. "Almost Ready" is a catchy enough song, but the flip "Hardcore" is a total rager. Upbeat and driving punk rock with some wild guitar solo work that leans towards the wild sound of the '60s garage psych scene. In the Sex Pistols film *DOA* you might remember a guy getting his jacket ripped open to display his NORMALS t-shirt.

Also on 'Lectric Eye records was another Louisiana punk band the Skinnies. The Skinnies were a little more power/pop new wave influenced, but still pretty wicked punk rock; fast-paced and catchy. Their single *Kill the Beat* features the kinda poppy track "I'm a dullard," but the flip "Out of Order" is a solid punk stormer. Again: kind of melodic and new wavey, but still catchy and direct.

Both these singles are rather rare. The Skinnies was recently re-issued. Even I am still seeking a copy of the Normals, although it was recently re-issued on CD.

Another Louisiana ripper is the first 7" by Shell Shock. Coming into the era of hardcore in 1981, Shell Shock blast out three tracks of primitive hardcore in the vein of early Black Flag. To my mind they sound a lot like the East LA Stains, who had an underrated LP on SST. The guitar tone is just right, and the raw, simplistic hardcore punk blasts are refreshing in an era when there's so much weird hardcore that's complicated to listen to and gets boring fast. One senses when listening that these guys probably got as much influence from Ted Nugent as the Sex Pistols, but the overall sound works. There're some good group choruses on "Your Way" and "Execution Time." This band later put out some more metal influenced stuff that I don't remember thinking was too good.



Proving It

Randy comes over my house to go to Critical Resistance, and I say this might be the last time I wear my hair like this, because I can't find a spray that I'm not allergic to. But I also can't find a new style that I like—something where my hair is down—it just feels too understated, and I feel like all the flaws on my face are magnified, like the bags under my eyes. And it's stressful because I'm going on tour, and when I'm on tour it's so important to feel like I can do something with my hair, I mean get it perfect, and then feel like I can face the world—I mean face the world without feeling like a complete mess.

So I keep trying all these new styles, but the other thing is that they make my face look too square. I need to figure out a new haircut where the bottom is rounded, and that will probably make a difference. But I need to figure it out first, because I can't go to get a haircut and just say, "What do you think we should do? I mean what do you think I should do?" I mean I like to know exactly what I want ahead of time, so that I don't end up hating it.

I forget how frantic I am at this time of the day, rushing to get out of the house. I mean I'm not rushing but I keep talking in circles. Maybe I am rushing. I'm not sure if I'm more frantic because Randy's here, or if I'm always this way it's just in my head so I don't notice as much. We get the bus and the BART right away, and right when we get off the train there's Joolie, coming from the conference.

She gives me a great hug, says, "You look wonderful," which is nice to hear since I was obsessing. Although then I'm thinking, will I look as good when I cut my hair? I mean I kept my hair really short for years and even shaved it all with clippers for a while, but now I feel like that kind of style made me look too severe.

It's kind of fun being in Oakland—I go there so rarely, so I'm always somewhat surprised that it's really a different city—the spacing of buildings, the air, the way people look at you, the foliage, the light. The event is right by Randy's house, and when we get close I realize there's a stream of people, and I remember Randy saying no one walks around here so I know we're all going to the event. We're right along the lake, which I'm sure is polluted as hell, but everything looks so sedate here with the sun lowering amidst the buildings reflecting the watery glow.

Everyone's gathered on the steps of the Scottish Rites Hall because they haven't opened the doors yet. Hilary comes running over—I'd forgotten Hilary was going to be here, and there's Jessica too, yay. Jessica says, "I didn't know you left the house this early," and I like that she understands it's a big deal for me to get here. It feels very festive and exciting, and people who might not generally socialize are smiling at one another.

Once the doors open, everyone's streaming in and we decide to go to the top, which is stairwell after stairwell, but then we're in this crazy grand space, trying to decide where to sit. Up here at the top there's more legroom so we try it out, but then one of the volunteers says we can't sit there yet—they want everyone to sit further down so that people aren't spread out. I say "Oh, I have a lot of chronic pain issues and it would be much more comfortable for me to sit here." He's not having it, and then someone else comes over and argues with me, saying we can sit down lower and that once it's time for people to sit up higher then we can move.

I don't understand this crowd control obsession at an event centered around abolishing prisons, but I'm also aware that our group is all white, as are most of the people in this section, and I'm arguing with two black male volunteers. It starts to feel like a depressing spectacle so we all sit down lower. Randy has already left because he got overwhelmed (I mean before the issue about the seating). I think he's not used to this type of crowd: dykes and activists of all types, or no, the vast majority women, and a fair number of black mothers with kids. I'm not sure which part made him uncomfortable, maybe just the crowd, and he lives only a few blocks away—an easy escape.

So I'm sitting next to Randy's empty seat and the show starts and the room is really hot and dusty and I start to get that ache all over my body. Is it because the seat backs are so hard, angled uncomfortably? Or maybe I'm worn out from arguing. I mean I know I'm worn out from arguing. I look back and sure enough the seats with more room have already filled. I mean I knew that would happen. I guess I could get up and sit with someone random. I don't really want to sit with someone random right now. Instead I keep getting up to stretch, then sitting back down.

The beginning of the show is mostly self-congratulatory rhetoric and I'm wondering why I'm staying. I mean I can tell that I'm going to get to that point where everything hurts, where nothing feels hopeful, but I'm here to feel hopeful. I got all the way here. I need to leave now.

I go back out into the hallway. There's Inez and Bea and Blake. I love these hugs, and Inez invites me to a barbecue, but I say I'm leaving because I'm in too much pain. Inez asks if I drive. "Do you want to take my car back to the city?" Which is so sweet. I mean it makes me feel like there is something like community sometimes. Oh, I can't drive.

But then Blake says he'll drive the car, and I'm thinking sitting in the car will hurt more than taking the BART, but then there's also the walk to the BART and I'd like to hang out with Blake. It's such a sweet offer from Inez I figure why not try it to see if it works? So then I say goodbye to Hilary and Jessica, plus Madigan and Abby who've joined us, then I'm back in the hall and Inez is giving us directions to the car, which looks like it's as far as the BART, but Blake says it's closer.

I don't want to talk about the walk to the car or the drive. I mean I like catching up with Blake, but then there's the pollution—I can't figure out if it's from the car or from the highway or both. Then there's the uncomfortable angle of sitting, and we're sitting in traffic: more pollution waiting for the bridge. And when we get back to San Francisco Blake wants to drop me off on Market Street, which is only ten blocks from my house, but it still means two buses. And the best part of the ride was that I would get right to my door.

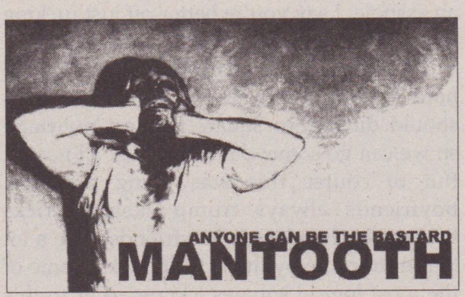
We're trying to think if there's somewhere to drop me off where there's just one bus, just O'Farrell, but then we're only three blocks from my house. I'm thinking this is one of the reasons I hate accepting rides, because then people want to drop you off somewhere else. I should've taken the BART is what I'm thinking. I would've been in less pain and I could've relaxed more. Now I can't even speak. Blake says "Okay you convinced me," and then we're at my house.

Upstairs I figure I better take a shower. Maybe that will help. Even though the chlorine will dry out my skin, it's a change of environment—the heat and moisture sometimes soothe the pain. Then I'm standing in the shower and I feel so overwhelmed by my limitations. I mean I guess I shouldn't even try to go to large public events anymore. And what will it be like on tour? It's just so hard to do anything—to go out there in the world. Then thinking about the dynamic of these two masculine black guys arguing with this queeny white fag in a space that's mostly white dykes and a lot of dykes of color, not as many trans people as I would've expected, a fair number of straight women of color, a few straight guys and way fewer fags. There are never fags in radical spaces I know that.

I'm thinking about arguing with these guys who were enforcing some kind of regulation for no reason except regulation, and I'm trying to tell them I have chronic pain issues. I mean I do tell them that, but they don't listen—maybe because I'm young and I look able-bodied or maybe because I'm a queen and I'm supposed to be a man. I hate that in situations like that it's like I have to prove my pain. I have to prove the way it will surround me, like there's a gesture I could make. I don't want the pain either.

I mean I probably would have gotten to that place of overwhelm anyway, but maybe not so soon. Maybe I could have seen Angela Davis or Linda Evans speak instead of staring into space feeling so suddenly separate from everyone, thinking about the heat and my allergies and the lack of oxygen. People looked over and I tried to smile. I was just sitting there so overwhelmed, and here these guys wanted me to prove that I was worthy of special treatment. I just wanted to sit and watch and feel inspired, but here's the shower. I can feel that shake in my chest that means tears maybe. Tears yes tears here. I'm hugging myself more tears in the shower. I'm hugging myself with tears.

I'll be touring October through December for my new novel, *So Many Ways to Sleep Badly*, so maybe we can meet up (check my homepage for dates, www.mattildabernsteinsycamore.com). And, the expanded second edition of *That's Revolting! Queer Strategies for Resisting Assimilation* is also finally available. You can check in on me via my blog, nobodypasses.blogspot.com. These days I'm the reviews editor at the brilliant new feminist magazine *Make/shift*, where I also have a column but only twice a year (that's how often the magazine comes out). I live for feedback, so feel free to contact me via my homepage, www.mattildabernsteinsycamore.com, which includes past *MRR* columns. Or you can write to me at 537 Jones Street, #3152, San Francisco, CA 94102.


ANYONE CAN BE THE BASTARD
MANTOOTH

It wasn't clear through the smoke who threw the first rock, but it caught me square in the thigh. I guess it could have been much worse. The rock could have whizzed across the creek and straight into my face. Like most people, my adolescence was filled with those near misses and close calls that make you stop and reflect on what a momentous achievement it is that you ever survived.

Over the years, certain truths and names have become worn down and erased by nostalgia, like how acid rain dulls statues and monuments that were once stones chiseled and shaped down by a sculptor. That being said, I would be wary of the details aside from three basic facts:
We had a rock fight in the woods.
We had a rock fight in the woods amidst a fire we started.
Anthony had his skull cracked open while he puked in the stream.

It was probably a humid summer day. Why else would so many neighborhood kids be out of school in the middle of the day? It also might have been a cool October weekend, though. Even with matches it was too hard to ignite the stack of *Playboys* we found stuffed in the trunk of a tree. So maybe it was a humid summer day. Anthony did have to go back up to his house for a can of gasoline to help get it burning.

Of course we all knew at the time that this was a bad idea. No one pointed this out, but we all knew that we all thought the same thing. Any time there'd be any sort of sound rustling in the leaves, we'd all think it was one of our parents, come to discover us with bunch of porno and matches. But when Anthony came back from his house, we all knew it was him by the way the leaves and sticks rustled. He walked with a limp because he had broken his leg some years before. It sounded like the wind stuttering through the woods.

His parents were Christian Scientists. They never took him to the doctor. Instead he spent almost two months bed-ridden while his mother and stepfather prayed over him three times a day. They took the opportunity to tear down his Pantera and Metallica posters and replace them with needlepoint phrases from the New Testament

When the Lord finally heard their prayers and he was able to walk on his own, Anthony was seemingly not the same boy. This was a great relief to his parents as he was particularly misbehaved prior. Anthony liked to swear and took to vandalizing most of the neighborhood when left to his own devices. It also must have been a chore teaching him a lesson time and time again, which is what eventually landed him bed-ridden anyhow.

Of course it's not surprising that sequestering a ten-year-old boy to his room without any contact besides for prayer would eventually produce this sickly shadow of his former self. Anthony's rosy-pale skin had given way to a splotchy gray, and his eyes sunk into the blank canvas that used to be a plump, beaming face. He was now prone to nausea and would vomit so frequently that we all just generally ignored it when it happened. He rarely ever said a word except to apologize for puking, so when he volunteered to go get the gasoline for our bonfire we were all really excited. It signaled a return to form.

Honestly, it was hard for any of us to take on his former role. None of us could ever really commit to the level of mischief he had previously mastered, so I think we were all just glad that the responsibility of coming up with new and interesting ways to get into and out of trouble could possibly be lifted soon.

Anthony walked over to the pile of *Penthouses* and *Playboys*, sloppily dumped the gas over it, and tossed the empty can a few feet away. When the match hit the drenched magazines, a fireball shot up into the trees, sending up a billowing plume of black smoke that quickly fell down around us like a blanket. I suddenly felt the rock hit my leg. I picked it up off the ground and flung it back from where I thought it came from. Everyone was throwing rocks now. The fire began to spread to the surrounding leaf litter. I was screaming that I'd been hit, but no one stopped launching rocks blindly into the air. Someone tossed a giant rock onto the blaze—it burst like a spider's egg sack, sending thousands of little flames crawling everywhere. One boy was squealing that he was on fire, but it served only to make us all throw harder.

Anthony was ignoring the battle, crouching down by the side of the creek staring deeply into a mass of small black tadpoles wriggling through the mud and algae. The creek moved slowly at this point, blocked up a little down the way by sticks and other debris. It carved out the side of a hill where the roots of a giant oak snaked out of the exposed side. On top of that small ridge was where we had built the fire and started throwing rocks at each other like fucking idiots.

The momentum of the rock fight slowly started to wane and we could all hear Anthony puking into the stream. It was a steady pour and then an abrupt stop. It was probably at this point that he was struck by a wayward chunk of sandstone. Someone scrambling through the dense smoke in search of more ammo tripped over his body.

He was lying on his side with his head partially submerged in the water. The giant chunk of sandstone lay broken in two just a few inches from his head. I think it was sandstone. The crack in his skull bled into the pool where it created a slurry of mud, vomit, and writhing tadpoles. They squirmed frantically around his head and maybe I imagined them crawling into his eyes and head wound. I turned and puked up my peanut butter and jelly sandwich. The current pushed the contents of my stomach up against his face, my bile adding to the cold soup. Someone started to cry loudly after it was clear that Anthony was not going to get up. This was not a near miss or a close call.

I think someone started to shake him violently, telling him to stop fucking around, telling him to get up, get the fuck up. It started to rain, pulling down the thick smoke from the forest canopy and covered our faces in grime. I think we were all crying. As the underbrush hissed and crackled, the stream slowly carried the blood and puke away in long wispy strands, flowing over rocks that were once boulders that were once mountains.

SHE'S OVER IT
BY BRONTEZ

I had started whining about a boyfriend again and desperately needed some motivational life coach to either change my diaper or punch me in the face (I generally complained about bullshit like this when I had nothing to do, and since I slacked *a lot* I complained about this *a lot*). Where oh where were all the wild boys?

Thought I had found one but it was a false start. He was into me but then there was the troubling baggage of his boyfriend. He wasn't just "not into me," but "not into me" in that way jocks don't get me. Like he didn't get what I was wearing or my physical appearance should be slimmer or taller or more muscular or some god-awful predictable shit. Ya know? (It's kinda hard to explain.) *I hate gay debutants.*

Some boys were looking high and low for Abercrombie models. I was just looking for S-W-E-E-T R-E-L-I-E-F. The exponential loneliness of the world made available bodies a luxury. Who has time to discriminate? In at least eight out of ten scenarios, unless the dude is an asshole, I say you're better off just fucking him.

I saw the wild boy face to face and looked hard at him (i.e., said telepathically). "You should ditch your square fucking boyfriend so we can go somewhere and fuck all nasty." But of course this was going nowhere. Boyfriends always trump sketchy tricks because in this climate, boyfriends were a lot harder to come by than cheap kicks. Some of the most logical squares I know cater to this philosophy. I think otherwise.

I had some gay older (in their 40s) role models (namely my gay uncles and an older bud of mine) come at me with some pretty whack shit concerning this subject. They all kept saying in one way or another that I was too old to still be single (I was 26 (?!?!?!?!?!?!)) My gay uncle said some whack shit about if I didn't mend my ho-ish ways I'd end up alone…with AIDS. I know he's just concerned but *shit-fuck-jesus*—what a bummer-fucked up thing to say!

My older gay bud read me some not very convincing statistics about the number of partnered people in my age group. I'm not really sure what these older gay brethren had invested in trying to convince me that I wasn't as cool as boys who have boyfriends, but to some degree it worked, and they really fucked with me with all their bullshit. I changed my online profile to "In a Relationship" so no one would know I was "different." I looked at my options and realized I had none. I could try to date a punk boy but *honey* it was sliiiiiiim pickens' in these parts. Contrary to what we make it look like, there aren't very many eligible down-ass gay punk boys in SF.

I refused to date any of those *sluts* in LIMP WRIST, and back in 2005 when me and Dan of Ace of Alex (or however the fuck you spell his band's name) worked together at this gay dinner hell hole named Sparky's, I asked him on a date fifteen times to no avail ("Oh Brontez, *you're crazy!*"). Anyone I could have dated was a one-night stand *years ago*, and I don't have the sense of humor it would take to hit on Castro Debutants. *Whatever*.

My one and only boyfriend ever was this (cuuuuuuuuute) barefoot hippie-ish hesher motherfucker. We boned to Black Flag and Sabbath records, and I haven't met a boy as worthy as him since. Alas, though our love lasted for four months (and that was in the earlier part of this decade), other than that I just get jerked around a lot. Like too many fag punk boys in the East Bay I mostly sit home lonely and sometimes try to scam on straight boys. (It's the East Bay—you sometimes don't have a choice but to scam on straight boys—and sometimes it works!)

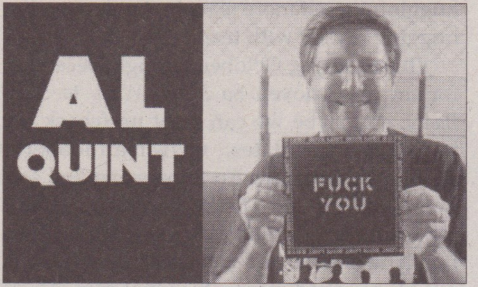
In the timeline following my heshed-out lone boyfriend, I occupied my time hooking up with every boy I could get my greedy fucking sex addict hands on: strangers, friends, enemies, people's boyfriends (I'm sooooooooooo *down* with OPP), roommates, bandmates and whoever else I forgot. It was all very hot, but there came a point where I felt I needed a different message.

I saw that old black and white Fellini movie *Nights of Cabiria,* where Cabiria (the hot, hard luck '50s Italian prostitute girl) is telling her girlfriend's pimp/boyfriend she doesn't need a pimp. "Why should I slave for filthy pigs like you?" Then I saw one of the girls that works the stroll on my street pull a knife out of her daisy dukes "Ain't no man gettin my money!!!!! I'm a renegade ho!" I held these two events close to my heart.

It's *not* that I see having a boyfriend as having a pimp. What I'm looking at here is the subtext: independence. I as a single girl didn't have to answer to anybody for my erratic and fucked up behavior. I had the freedom to go to the bathhouse, spend (a very affordable) seven bucks to get in and let twenty different guys fuck me if the mood so carried me—or rather I could do this in theory (I kinda don't have the patience to get fucked by twenty guys).

My true love was out there, Goddess bless his heart, but I felt like in the cosmic sequence of things he misplaced my number, and our paths were not to meet up for awhile. Whatever. I refused to act like some of the sad ass girls I know and just fuck Mr. Whoever-comes-along and when I thought about—and I mean *really thought about it*—I did what I usually do when I'm in deep pondering. I said fuck it. I've had waaaaaaaaaaay too much feminist training (thank fucking god) to even seriously entertain the question of "Why ain't I got a man?" for longer than an hour or so at a time. I choose the path of least resistance (i.e., opting to not give a shit) and I'm not waiting on my man.

Totally,
Brontez



THE LAST POGO

It was the spring of 1978 and I was listening to one of my favorite radio shows, *The Demimonde*, on one of the local college stations. I had the tape deck ready to go and the host with the odd moniker Oedipus (whose real name is Eddie Hyson) announced a song by a Toronto band called Teenage Head. Over the intro to the song, Oedi went, "You're tearin' me apart honey." It was one rockin' tune, still a favorite. And, it turns out, a different version from the one that appeared on their debut single of the same name, possibly a demo version. In any case, I've never heard/seen it anywhere else so I imagine I have something of a rarity, there.

Actually, some months before that, *Circus Magazine*, which generally covered more mainstream rock and pop and with little of the irreverence of *Creem*, had a "Punk Rock Special" issue in November of 1977. Henry Winkler was staring out from the cover, there were pieces on Foghat, Black Oak (they'd dropped the Arkansas by then and Jim Dandy Mangrum was calling himself JD), and the woman who played Lt. Uhura on *Star Trek*. There was also a *Star Wars* poster of C3PO. So it was as much for the nerds as the rockers.

The "punk special" had kind of a worldwide roundup with the usual suspects, although some of the descriptions were rather humorous—Generation X was "ghoul rock?" Maybe due to Billy's shock-white hair, but I can't think of another reason anyone would use that description. There were small segments on LA and Boston and then Chicago, Ohio and Toronto. A few bands were mentioned, including Teenage Head and the Viletones ("With their lead singer Nazi Dog"). With the latter, I was simultaneously repulsed and intrigued, and once I heard the two-chord (or was it three?) buzzsaw riff, the repulsion went out the window.

I was thinking about those introductions to Toronto punk while watching *The Last Pogo*, a documentary about the city's punk scene circa 1978. Actually, this 26-minute piece, shot in 16mm, is a document of the last show at a venue called the Horseshoe Tavern, which had hosted punk gigs for the previous nine months.

Each band is represented by one song, plus there's commentary from band and audience members between each song, and the best one comes from the vocalist of a band that wasn't invited to play. That's Mickey DeSadist, mastermind behind the Forgotten Rebels (of "Surfin' On Heroin" fame, who were actually from Hamilton). He calls the event "one big farce" and complains that they can't take a real punk band. He then starts mocking the voice of the Mods' front-man and the film goes right into this skinny tie band's performance. Actually, Mickey has a point about the annoying nature of that guy's melodramatic timbre.

In a more positive vein, the two guys named Gary behind the bookings talk about their motivation—which basically boiled down to booking music they loved—and said the "new generation deserves recognition."

Punk is a fairly broad definition here. The Scenics had a Who-ish/'60s beat influence. There's a little of that with the Cardboard Brains, Secrets, and Mods, as well. The Ugly, on the other hand had the pure punk snottiness and attitude. Ditto for the Viletones, and things started getting rowdier during their set.

The cops eventually showed up to shut things down due to overcrowding, but Teenage Head still got to do one song, "Picture My Face." That's a fairly laid-back song in their repertoire—who knows what would have happened if they'd played one of their faster-paced songs. Actually, things did get smashed up anyway when it was announced the show was over. A chaotic conclusion.

This was the first time I've ever had the opportunity to see live footage of these bands and it definitely whets the appetite for more. Because, while not all the bands here are mesmerizing, I'm a punk history buff and enjoyed seeing it documented at the time it unfolded, as opposed to a more "modern" take like *American Hardcore*. Just a few extras—commentary by Chris Haight from the Viletones that you can play with the film, and there's also a full recorded-in-the-studio set from the Scenics that showcases their taut approach.

And here's some good news: Brunton is doing a more comprehensive film, *The Last Pogo Jumps Again*, about the Toronto punk scene from '76 to '78. He's also set up a website, www.thelastpogo.net, with a blog that includes updates, stories, etc., plus ordering info for the DVD.

LESS POLITICS, MORE PUNK

...this time around, at least. As I said last time, this column is going to be shorter from now on so I'll be mixing up the political, personal and musical from one month to another. Truth be told, the last category is a lot more fun to write about—although a lot of the music I listen to often has sociopolitical content, some of it articulated better than others, of course. So here are some recent highlights:

Schizophrenic Records (17 W 4th St., Hamilton, ON, CANADA L9C 3M2, www.schizophrenicrex.com) continues to crank out some solid releases featuring bands from around the planet, both old and new. The vintage international hardcore compilation *I Thrash, Therefore I Am* originally came out on BCT as a cassette in 1985 and also had a CD release some years back with 55 songs (as opposed to the 30 here). No complaints, here. That's impossible when you drop the needle down and get assaulted by MOB 47's classic raw thrash and that's just for starters.

I'm sure the connoisseur is familiar with the likes of ANTI-CIMEX, ENOLA GAY and MODERAT LIKVIDATION, but PRODUCT ASSAR, EXISTENZ and AKUTT INNLEGGELSE (including a future member of TURBONEGRO!) might not be as well-known. The blueprint is loud, fast n buzzing and done in wanton fashion. For people who are unaware of BCT's history, it was a tape-only label that featured a wide array of bands from all over the world and, along with comps like *Welcome To 1984* and *Cleanse The Bacteria*, introduced many of us 'mericans to formidable noise outside the country.

look at a comp like this an introduction to spur further exploration. It provides an impetus to track down more music by these bands. In those pre-internet days (aka the Dark Ages!), you relied on trading with pen pals overseas to dig even further. Hopefully, that'll be the case with this album. Nicely packaged with the insert/foldout featuring an interview with Chris BCT where he tells the story behind the label.

There are some savage sounds on SLANG's *The Immortal Sin*, the latest from this veteran Japanese band. An overdriven DISCHARGE influence imbued with searing guitar and punishing drums, accompanied by the obligatory harsh vocalizing. It's not cookie cutter tribute, either, but just one element of their attack. One ripper after another and achieving the desired (by this listener) gut punch. I'm writing euphemistically, of course. There are four cover versions appended onto the disk, including yet another take of NEGATIVE APPROACH's "Ready to Fight"—and it's the second time they've done it, with the previous version on a comp called "Back On The Streets." More interesting are their versions of songs by KURO, RATOS DE PORAO, and RIPCORD, which adapt well to their full-bore pillage.

SACRED SHOCK is from Texas and includes 3/4 of ARMY OF JESUS. Speedy hardcore punk punctuated by Alex's hoarse vocals and plenty of guitar pyrotechnics—from the string scrape on "Overshadowed //Underestimated" to the speed metal trill on "Double Standards," which also has feisty circle pit break. Some of those guitar lines also add a dash of melody to the proceedings but make no mistake—this is obliteration.

PISSCHRIST returns with another burning dose of crust-core on their latest opus *Victims Of Faith* (Yellow Dog, www.yellowdog.de). No surprises, no change in formula—just loud n fast Scandinavian-inspired wreckage. Vocals that are hoarse beyond belief and pounding riffage and drumming. I mean, it's nothing that hasn't been done a million times before—but lest that comes across as damning with faint praise—this is a solid effort. Hopefully they'll get back to the states so I can stop whining about missing them in '07.

SOCIALCIDE's *Unapproachable* (Even Worse, www.geocities.com/evenworserecords Kangaroo, or www.geocities.com/tysonkangaroo): It's a hot mix with these dozen songs spread over twelve inches of wax. Hmm... perverted description? Anyway, the production is cleaned up a bit from their other records and doesn't suffer at all—blazing, no BS hardcore punk with a pretty negative attitude—or perhaps, more accurately, impatient and accusatory. "SDA," for instance, which stands for "Stupid Drunk Asshole." Even the double-speed moments are done with ruthless efficiency. Poison Idea provides some of the inspiration and a song like "Will Call" has an old-school west coast 'core flavor, as well. Really comin' into their own here.

BRING DOWN THE HAMMER is a new band with a familiar face—Chad Malone, late of BROTHER INFERIOR, ASSEMBLY OF GOD, and the LEVELERS. When I got this self-titled album (Know Records, PO Box 90579, Long Beach, CA 90809, www.knowrecords.com), Chad mentioned how psyched he was to be playing hardcore again. The urge to rage continues to grab at his being and it comes out loud and clear with the sentiments expressed.

As you would expect, given his past lyrical history, Chad continues to have a major issue with religion and also throws barbs at reactionary "pundit" Ann Coulter and those who suppress the rights of the worker. On the more positive side, there's a salute to the over-30 punk folks with the street-punk flavored "Never Give In, Never Give Up." Musically, it's mainly a barrage of double-speed thrash with some more measured arranging from time to time and, truth be told, those are the best songs here.

The French band LOST BOYS has two new 7"s available. Well, one is a vinyl pressing of their demo (that's the one with the "Fuck You" sleeve that now graces my column header photo). Rough 'n' ready punk rock—they bring a hardcore attitude to a garage-tinged sound. Or maybe it's a garage attitude to hardcore. I don't know, but bands like DEAN DIRG are very good at that kind of mix 'n' match to create a sound that grabs 'ya—and the Lost Boys are no exception. (band contact: www.stillholdingon.free.fr/lostboys)

I'll wrap it up with a pair of recent releases on Prank Records (PO Box 410892, SF, CA 94141-0892, www.prankrecords.com), both of which have received kudos in these pages, but let me add my voice to the choir since they're favorites of late. AVSKUM's *Uppror Underifrån* is a molotov mix of perfected Swede-core and lyrical anger, which is what you'd expect from a band kicking it out as long as they have. Avskum have honed it down to the essence—blazing riffs driven by rumbling bass and crashing drums.

Prank has also unleashed the latest from Japanese legends GAUZE, *Binbou Yusuri No Rizumu Ni Notte*. I had to copy the title of the album from the Prank website, since the translations for the song titles are clumsy—the title loosely translates to "Riding In The Rhythm of the Poverty Shaking." But is it really necessary to be concerned with these types of details when it comes to the unholy sound that GAUZE detonates? I don't think so. The band's first record in over ten years rages like a motherfucker. A raw, uncompromising thirteen-minute onslaught, favoring a razor-sharp guitar attack, rabidly delivered vocals and drumming that flails away without letup.

Before leaving, I neglected to mention Ellen's and my awesome trip to San Francisco at the end of August, including a trip to *MRR* house to record a few sets for the radio show. Getting to hang out with a lot of cool people as well as take in the sights (I'll admit it—we *love* the sea lions) made for a great time. And it's great to see 924 Gilman still going strong. I still wish we had a space like that here. The only disappointment was not making an effort to meet Bruce Roehrs at that bar he always mentions in his column—I wanted to down a couple of brews with him. Oh well... next time!

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RaNSoM
NoTE$
by Erika Ransom

"I am paying attention/ but I have an observation/ I am paying attention/ but I have an observation/ Fuck your system/ Fuck what you're telling me/ Fuck your authority/ Fuck your propaganda!" —The Baby Shakers, 1998

Early Warning Signs of Fascism*

1. Powerful and Continuing Nationalism
2. Disdain for Human Rights
3. Identification of Enemies As A Unifying Cause
4. Supremacy of the Military
5. Rampant Sexism
6. Controlled Mass Media
7. Obsession With National Security
8. Religion and Government Intertwined
9. Corporate Power Protected
10. Labor Power Suppressed
11. Disdain for Intellectuals and the Arts
12. Obsession With Crime and Punishment
13. Rampant Cronyism and Corruption
14. Fraudulent Elections

(*After studying seven fascist regimes, Laurence W. Britt distilled these fourteen common points of fascism. He studied: Adolph Hitler's Nazi Germany; Benito Musolini's Italy; Francisco Franco's Spain; Antonio De Oliveiro Salazar's Portugal; George Papadopolous's Greece; Agosto Pinochet's Chile; and Mohamed Suharto's Indonesia. *Anything feel familiar?*)

The Long War

"Winter grows bitter and drags on. War drums continue to sound in the distance; time passes filled with dark skies and rain. Cold air blows in from under the door and seagulls dance white breasted into the wind. This month, my friends, enjoy a few words of rancor and discontent. I start a fire, and begin with an eerie story…" (*Ransom Notes*, March 2003)

Fuckin' hell. Time keeps on ticking, ticking, ticking on, and what has fucking changed?

The first time I wrote for *MRR* was for the May 1998 issue. I put together a piece for the now extinct "Ask a Punk a Question" feature. I asked punks at a show in Framingham, "What do you think of the US bombing Iraq?" Four months later, President Clinton ordered air strikes. Ten years and an occupying force later, where are we now?

Every day, the violence in Iraq escalates. IraqBodyCount.org gave a brief report of the causalities for Sunday, Oct. 5: "Twenty six dead. Ninewa Mosul: Ten members of the same family (three children) died during a US forces attack and a suicide bombing inside a building; gunmen killed a butcher; gunmen killed a teacher in his car; a sniper killed a policeman; gunmen killed four mourners in a drive-by shooting; gunmen killed a customs employee; three bodies were found. Diyala Hussein al Hamad: Gunmen attacked the village, killing three. Wassit Numaniya: Gunmen killed one. Tameem Kirkuk: One body was found."

This is nothing new. We have been swimming in blood for years. Why doesn't the American public learn from the recent past? How can we let it all continue? The story keeps repeating each year and rendition scratching deeper through flesh and bone.

"I remember Bush Sr.'s public relations campaign for 'Operation Desert Storm' in 1990. The motto then was "Support Our Troops." I was in high school, wearing out my first Ramones tape. At night I'd bike around my small town and tear down the plastic yellow ribbons tied to fucking everything.

How sad people "supported" our troops to die, to come home mutilated, and to kill so mercilessly. Like all good propaganda, the message was simple, and repeated often. It tapped into people's worst fears: that their sons and daughters, friends and lovers would die halfway across the world. Of course, supporting the war didn't help keep anyone alive.

Sad, ridiculous, incredulous sheep wearing yellow ribbons.

For the common man and woman, war is, and has always been, death—the death of young army recruits, and the many more women, children, men, elderly and others who cannot escape harm's way. The battlefield is strewn with the corpses of "non-combatants" who are not interested in the latest poll or the price of oil.

And what is to be gained from all this slaughter?

We have entered a period that the administration of George W. Bush has termed the "War on Terror" or the "Long War" that has no clear enemies, no borders and no comprehensible end in sight. The Long War, like the War on Drugs, is perpetual in scope and design. For those seeking power, this is a golden opportunity. Freedom of speech is curtailed, the crowds are rallied against a common enemy, civilians are spied on and funds diverted to the military and weapons manufacturers.

In the States people have been drawn towards a combination of right wing Christianity and nationalism to calm their fears. In a glittering example of this fusion of government and religion, Vice Presidential hopeful Sara Palin's preacher said during the sermon, "Jesus wants war. Jesus wants you to fight and die for him. Jesus is leading our country and we must follow him." God Bless Our Troops! God Bless America!

Fucking hell. Yellow ribbons with such slogans now come as slick magnets for your car.

"Born/ breed/ consume/ die/ All you swallow are the lies/ Born/ breed/ consume/ die/ You fucking American maggot/ are you ready to die for your country?" —the Profits

Crime and Punishment

"It was such an intense weekend I even started smoking again. I went to CBGBs for the first time, drank dark pints of Brooklyn Lager with our NYC friends, and my band played on that hallowed punk rock stage. I was also in town to attend Critical Resistance East, a gathering of activists against the prison-industrial complex, and to talk about my project in Boston and connect with other folks. It was a weekend that rocked my world." (guest column, May 2001).

"Being unknown, the crowd listened to us but didn't dance. People clapped and bobbed heads but there was that physical space of we-don't-know-who-the-fuck-you-are between us onstage and the crowd five feet away. Then, halfway through our set, I introduced a song by talking about the prison industrial complex.

I said, "There are two million people in prison in the United States. This is unacceptable. We want justice. Their brand of 'criminal justice' is no justice at all. Two million people. This is unacceptable."

Then the crowd began yelling about cops and courts and people moved forward. I was overwhelmed. There was a spark between us. These kids moved forward not for another power chord but for the fact that our prison system is eating people alive. They know what's going on. The prisons that dot the American landscape are strongholds of racism and capitalist power, a method of control as deadly as any bullet.

It is difficult to grasp how many people are currently imprisoned in the United States. For one, the US locks up more of its citizens than any other country in the world—even more than Communist China or post-Soviet Russia. And a disproportionate number of people in prison are poor, are African American, are Indigenous, are Latino. What is this? This is a form of genocide.

As Tina Williams, who was a prisoner in MCI Framingham in Massachusetts for seventeen years said, "I've never met a rich person in prison."

Again, what the fuck has changed? Since writing that column, the US prison population has steadily increased to 2.3 million people. According to the *Washington Post,* more than one in 100 adults in the United States is currently in jail or prison. If the US prisoner population were a city, it would be the 4th largest city in the US, only behind NYC, Los Angles and Chicago. Staggeringly, there are more prisoners in the US than people in Houston. And of those people, According to the Department of Justice, 48% percent committed non-violent offences.

Add to this the post-9/11 "War on Terror" that has spawned secret US military ships holding prisoners around the world and the horrors of Guantánamo Bay. The President has sanctioned torture, and hundreds of people have been held without trial or legal counsel.

And what does the future hold? Prison labor camps and civilian detention centers could be just around the corner. In a new twist to the prison-industrial-military complex, the Pentagon has recently drafted plans for civilian inmates to work on Army installations—an updated version of the chain gangs forced to build railroads, toil in mines and work on plantations in the Jim Crow South not that long ago.

In January 2006, the Army Corps of Engineers awarded Halliburton subsidiary Kellogg Brown & Root a $385 million contract to construct detention centers somewhere in the United States, to deal with "an emergency influx of immigrants into the US, or to support the rapid development of new programs." And exactly what the hell do they mean by that?

Hundreds of detention centers, each able to hold five thousand people, will be built around the US in the next few years. Who are they for? No one knows for sure, as it's a government secret. Many speculate that the "new programs" would be implemented if there were another major terrorist attack.

Vietnam-era whistleblower Daniel Ellsberg said, "Almost certainly this is preparation for a roundup after the next 9/11 for Mid-Easterners, Muslims and possibly dissenters. They've already done this on a smaller scale, with the 'special registration' detentions of immigrant men from Muslim countries, and with Guantanamo."

And we shouldn't forget the US has done something similar before. After Imperial Japan attacked Pearl Harbor in 1941, 110 thousand people of Japanese ancestry, most of them American citizens, were sent to "War Relocation Camps." Could this happen again?

Fucking hell.

Three strikes and you're out, black and you're out, poor and you're out. Muslim, Arab, Mexican, political dissenter, immigrant, eco-rights activist, war resister—the list will only get longer as more and more people are locked away.

Solitary confinement chambers are being built every day and the prisons are full. Do you notice the growing cities behind razor wire?

Tick, Tick, Tock

The clock strikes midnight and my time is done here. I prepare to pack it up and send this one off. One more column, this time, the last episode of *Ransom Notes.*

Over the last six years I've written some 70 odd columns. My writing has gone from a mix of politics, punk and random stories to thoughts about life, traveling, squats, punks and interesting people I've met along the way. Back in the beginning, I wrote a manifesto.

"Why do I bother staying up late in the night, banging my head against the keyboard?

"I wonder what the hell is going on here. I try to expose the ways this white supremacist, patriarchal, capitalist system weaves itself into our lives and poisons our communities, our minds and our earth. Often, I despair. But, I am constantly inspired by the energy of people who resist domination and fight for justice and equality. That is our hope and future! We must claim our lives and dreams!

"Through it all, my head is filled with crashing power chords, the energy of a good Boston show the night before, late nights with old friends trying to figure out this fucked up place we live in, riding the road with my band The Profits, my favorite mix tapes, and the sound of my own screams."

I wanted this last column to be in that spirit. The "Long War" and the rising percentage of incarcerated people in the US are two more dead canaries in the coalmine. Since 9/11, the US has been moving towards a fascist state at ever increasing speed.

Will we heed the sirens?

Last Notes

"If I can't dance I don't want to be part of your revolution." —Emma Goldman

In the past year I've been constantly on the move, on tour as a roadie and for fun, lucky to have the opportunity to travel across the US and Europe with some of my favorite people on the planet. It also means that I've been unsettled, living out of my suitcase. I've lost my column inspiration at times, feeling disconnected from friends, familiar places, projects, punks, and the anarchist and video work I was doing before. In the last few months, life has changed once again. I've moved to Spain to live with my sweetheart, to explore this adventure, to escape the U$A, and try something new. It has been amazing so far.

The *MRR* crew is working hard to improve the magazine, and it's time for new voices. I feel lucky to have had space in this zine to rant and rave over the years, and now it will be someone else's turn. Thanks so much to *MRR* for their support, to my handful of friends over the years who have helped me with writer's block, proofreading, ideas, and always being there with advice and encouragement. And hey, you, ´punk! Thanks so much for reading. It's been a hell of a ride.

Channel Zero DVD (Last chance for self-promotion…)

In the US, you can order it from AK Press (akpress.org). In Europe it's £6 from Active Distribution (activedistribution.org; Active Distribution, BM ACTIVE, London, WC1N 3XX, England) or 6.50 euros from Ruin Nation Records (PO BOX 10 58 24, 28058 Bremen, Germany).

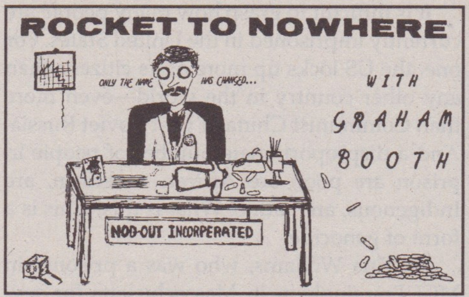
The DVD is the complete collection of *Channel Zero*, a community TV show that I put together and hosted in San Francisco. It started as a project that I "hoped would create a TV show that would sneak into American living rooms, filling the usual corporate and state propaganda picture tube with an alternative viewpoint of life."

Channel Zero includes my best video of punk shows across the US and Europe from the past five years, and interviews with local SF folks like Wendy-o Matik, Ramsey Kanaan of AK Press and Golnar Nikpour. Bands include: The Subhumans (UK), Behind Enemy Lines, The Restarts, Imperial Leather, Vitamin X, Citizen Fish, To What End?, Signal Lost, Peligro Social, Caustic Christ, Surrender, Ballast, and more. I also interviewed people while on my travels, including at the 56@ Infoshop in London, the Friesen Crew in Bremen, and at the AJZ in Bielefeld, Germany. I was also given a tour of Banksy graffiti works around London by an amiable vegan and met several wonderful ladies at the Folsom Street S/M Fair in SF.

Up th' punks!

There is nothing left to say but good luck, have fun, and see you on the road! Friends and folks please get in touch: erika.ransom@gmail.com. I love postcards, letters and zines, so please send those as well, through old-fashioned mail: Erika Ransom/ Calle Maestro Peñaranda 46/ Villanueva del Rio Segura/ 30613 Murcia/ SPAIN. Spanish punks drop me a line!

Solidarity and blazing guitars, Erika



OOF! I am in utter fucking disbelief! It is 1:30 am. as I sit down to write this column. As usual, whenever I'm in front of a computer I check my email every five minutes. Well, just five minutes ago I was reading a Gemm search notice sitting in my inbox. (You know, gemm.com, your favorite place to buy records on the internets?) The want list agent had been triggered by the words "Who asked you." I was kinda spacing and forgot what record the song was on… in hindsight it's totally ridiculous considering I have been trying to replace this record for ten years. It's just, well, I wasn't expecting to see a notice for one of the most rare US punk records waiting for me in my inbox.

There it was: "THE EXIT—*Who Asked You / Down on the Street*—City Rock 1979 W/PS" Boi-oing! THE EXIT! WTF?! Oh, and the clincher: $17.25. I started clicking away and before I knew it my heart was pounding out of my chest. Wow. This is exciting. I tried to relax, keeping in mind that I would lose valuable seconds if I typed my login/password wrong. I had to get this record.

You see, it may seem inconsequential to you, but every time I think I have nothing to worry about, I remember the AMBULANCE debacle of 2004. Back then I was going to school in Houston, and a similar Gemm notice was in my inbox for the AMBULANCE *It's All Up To You* 7"—a pretty rare US power pop 45 from New Jersey, although maybe not as amazing as its current price tag would have you think.

This was roughly six months after the first copy on eBay sold for several hundred dollars, and I'd all but resigned myself to never getting one again. I can't even remember what Japanese record I traded my copy for back around 2000. So Gemm tells me a store in New Jersey has a copy for $6.00. Unreal. I clicked over to their website and Gemm said the record was still available. Within seconds I was clicking and typing furiously, going through three tedious pageloads of order details and confirmation clicks. Then, on what was supposed to be the last page in bold text *"Sorry, this item is no longer available."* During the 45 seconds I was ordering the record someone else beat me to it and I've never been able to get over it. Could you?

So yeah, THE EXIT. I kept it calm and typed in the details quickly. I even remembered my three-digit card verification number from my credit card so I didn't have to waste time fumbling for my wallet. Within 30 seconds, just as I was getting short of breath, I clicked "Confirm." According to Gemm, THE EXIT 45 is mine! So Rad! Of course, I'd never take Gemm's word for it. I needed to do some damage control just in case one of my rivals got the same email notice. Most importantly, I made sure the store didn't have a stand-alone website with their entire inventory duplicated.

Turns out the store is in Toronto. Crazy! It seems like Canadian stores/distributors are one of the last great sources for obscure US punk records. Many records that sold well in the US were totally ignored or forgotten in Canada, and 30 years later they're still sitting untouched in a warehouse. Toronto punk collectors always like to brag that CHRONIC SICK LPs were a dime a dozen around Toronto well into the '90s while most US collectors had never even seen a copy. Now that makes me *sick*!

Thankfully today's Toronto store has no stand-alone website, just the GEMM one. They do have a phone number listed, so I'll just have to hope someone else doesn't get the same email and decide to make a phone call and intercept it. I wonder how many people even have the search saved? Can't be many, maybe two or three people? I just hope I get some kind of response today—I definitely won't make it through the weekend without an answer.

What's the deal with THE EXIT you ask? THE EXIT was a Chicago band in the late '70s. They were from the Southside—which by Chicago terms might as well be another state, since the scenes around the city are so dispersed and insular. Some of the rarest Chicago singles came from the Southside, including the heavily sweated DV8 "Guns on the Right" 45 and the still little known SUNDOG SUMMIT 7" EP, which was recorded at the same studio as THE EXIT. I've never seen flyers or heard of EXIT shows, so I have no idea who they played around with. I'm not even sure whether they were actively trying to be a punk band—I get a bit of a new wave/bar band vibe from their two songs—but there is no doubt that they were fans of the SEX PISTOLS.

I first discovered THE EXIT 45 in 1998. I was playing a show at the famed Off the Alley club in Homewood. This was an ideal venue for me since the club was attached to one of Chicago's oldest independent record stores, Record Swap. I was just getting into Killed By Death type records, mostly to use as trade bait for the US hardcore records I was fiending for at the time.

I had already had a lot of luck scouring the dollar bins on the floors of other Chicago stores like 2nd Hand Tunes and Reckless Records. This was my first time to Record Swap in several years, and I was stoked to discover a large bin of old store stock singles languishing in a cabinet underneath the main singles section. Lots of old covers I'd never seen before looked promising, and most of them were three to four dollars, so I started making a stack.

A couple of the killers I found on that fateful day were THE DOGS *Teen Slime* 45 from Iowa, and ICE 9 *Out Out Out* 7" EP from Portland, which sported a very rare white/green silkscreened sleeve that I've only seen a handful of times since. But THE EXIT single was the real surprise. I'm not sure why I even bought it—the cover has an arty new wave vibe, certainly nothing I was listening to in my hardcore dayz. Consider this: I still kick myself for some of the *other* things I left behind that day—namely an AMBULANCE *It's All Up To You* 7" with its Texas Hard Rockin' Pink picture sleeve. That makes two AMBULANCE singles I've missed for less than $10 in a lifetime!

I can still remember getting home and spinning THE EXIT the first time. Nothing rough or over the top about it, I was kinda troubled that I liked both songs from this obscure Chicago bar band. Would other punk fans even like this thing? (But both songs were solid, and "Who Asked You" has remained thoroughly lodged in my brain ever since.) I did some cursory internet searches and couldn't come up with anything. I was convinced nobody had ever heard THE EXIT before. Could this be *my* discovery? Ehh, it's not super punk. I figured nobody else would like it and forgot about it.

It was about a month before I received thee punk mailorder list from Germany. I am of course referring to Ingo's punk list. For a time, Ingo definitely had the rare punk records market on lock, and pretty much every known punk want list item appeared on his lists at some point.

There, on the second page of his little booklet was one of my most ogled sections—the "most wanted" list. Up until then I had a lot of luck trading my records for other things on his list, but he never gave me huge credit since he was just going to resell all of them. I figured if I could get something from the "most wanted" list, I could basically have my pick from his catalog. Remember, this was back when I was on a $20 a week record budget, and Ingo's prices were often in the high hundreds of dollars. Trade was all I could ever hope to afford.

So I combed his list hoping something from my Record Swap finds might generate some trade bait for an ANTIDOTE or BIG BOYS 7". There were about 40 records I'd never heard of from all over the world. Who is BENITOKAGE? Where does someone even begin to consider getting a Thai SEX PISTOLS sleeve? Aww… nothing as usual. Except, here's a new one? I think I might have gotten this last month with all of those singles, but, really? That was a kinda tepid record, it must be a different band with the same name. I scrambled to locate my recently purchased EXIT single and checked the song titles against the list. Sure enough, *Who Asked You* (City Rock). Jesus. Someone else *is* looking for this record. Where did they ever hear of it!?

Dumbfounded that I'd suddenly found an in demand KBD punk record for $3, I was eager to cash it in for a top want. It's not every day you can basically have your pick of singles. I wrote the German to confirm what his offer was, and how much I would have for my spending spre—1000 DM! That could get me pretty much anything on the list. This was probably more money than I'd ever had at one time in my life. It was time to pick something I would probably *never* be able to get again.

I decided on THE DICKS *Hate the Police* 7", M-/M- condition with insert. I pointed out that the price was a bit short of my trade credit, and the German agreed to send me $100 along with my near perfect DICKS single. It was quite a month for 1998!

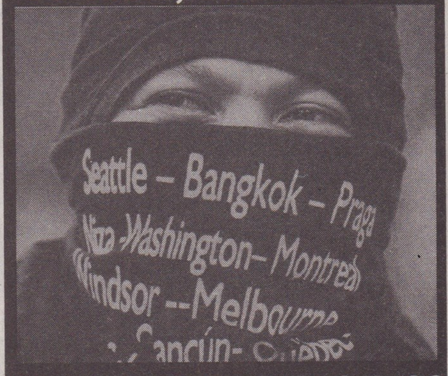
Fast-forward ten years. It took a while to realize it, but localism has become really important to me in collecting. Maybe it's the shared experience, maybe it's the dumbfounding fact that the records exist at all, but Chicago records, despite all their faults, are the ones I hold dearest to my heart. I've managed to get pretty much everything in the meantime, but not that damn EXIT single. I can sit here and hear the tune in my head, but I still don't have the record.

Over those years I've had the opportunity to get the DICKS single at least ten times. I had a shot at an EXIT single *one* time. I passed, deciding rather to keep my CHOSEN FEW *The Jokes On You* 7" from Australia—I would probably *never* be able to replace a CHOSEN FEW 7". That was five years ago, and I even came to regret that decision. I could've had another CHOSEN FEW single at least three or four times, but no dice on THE EXIT single.

Two years ago "Who Asked You" was featured on the *Staring Down the Barrel* LP compilation, so now everybody's heard it, and if a copy turned up on eBay it would do some serious damage. I'd resigned myself to trying to win it, but maybe I just got a pass.

God knows if I will actually get THE EXIT 7" this time around. If I do it will be the end of my longest active record search to date. Ten years is a long time to look for anything. Most people only collect records for a couple years, giving up when they can't get the tougher things on their lists. I've been doing it for fifteen years and I have pretty much anything I care deeply about. There are still a few holdouts, but most of them are mediocre records I can die without. On to the next one I guess…

Go Team, Smash State!



"Lefty" Hooligan • What's Left?

When I was three, four years old, my dad sat my sister and me down on the living room rug most Sunday mornings, spread out the color comics, and read them to us. I quickly picked up on what was going on in the word balloons and captions, and that's why I could read before I entered kindergarten. Of course, that's not how reading was taught in schools at the time. I saw whole words, not words made up of individual letters in an alphabet. My teachers had to teach me to read all over again, a very painful experience especially because I could read to them the very words they insisted that I couldn't read.

I've had a special fondness for the comic section of a newspaper ever since. It's the first section I turn to when I'm reading the local paper, which is why I was pissed off when the *SF Chronicle* announced a month ago that they were cutting back the Sunday comics from six pages to four. Here's a newspaper going down the toilet, losing a million dollars a month according to rumor, and they're cutting back on one of the few things that people purchase the paper for? Makes no sense. They cut some strips and reduced others to magnifying glass size. Fortunately, they haven't messed with the daily black and white comics page. If they ever do I'll boycott the *Chron*. Maybe make it a campaign.

Comics are important. That's something I have to say to folks of my age and older. Comics aren't merely entertaining. They frequently convey the "news of the day" much

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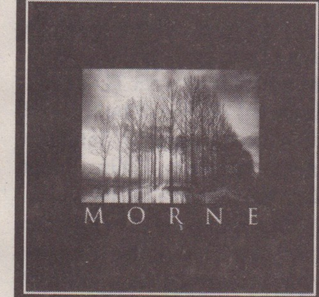

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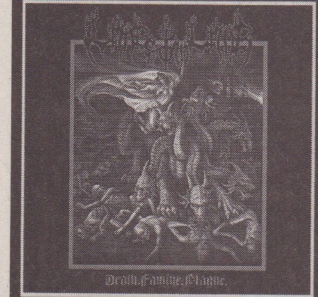

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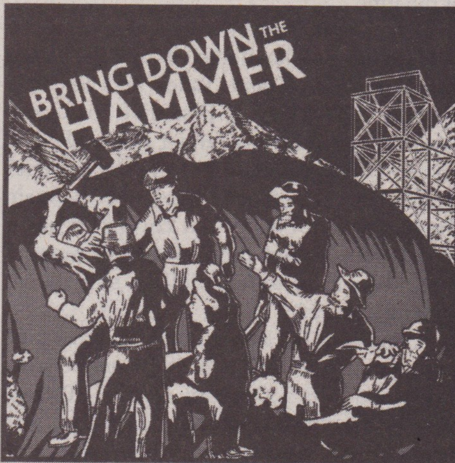

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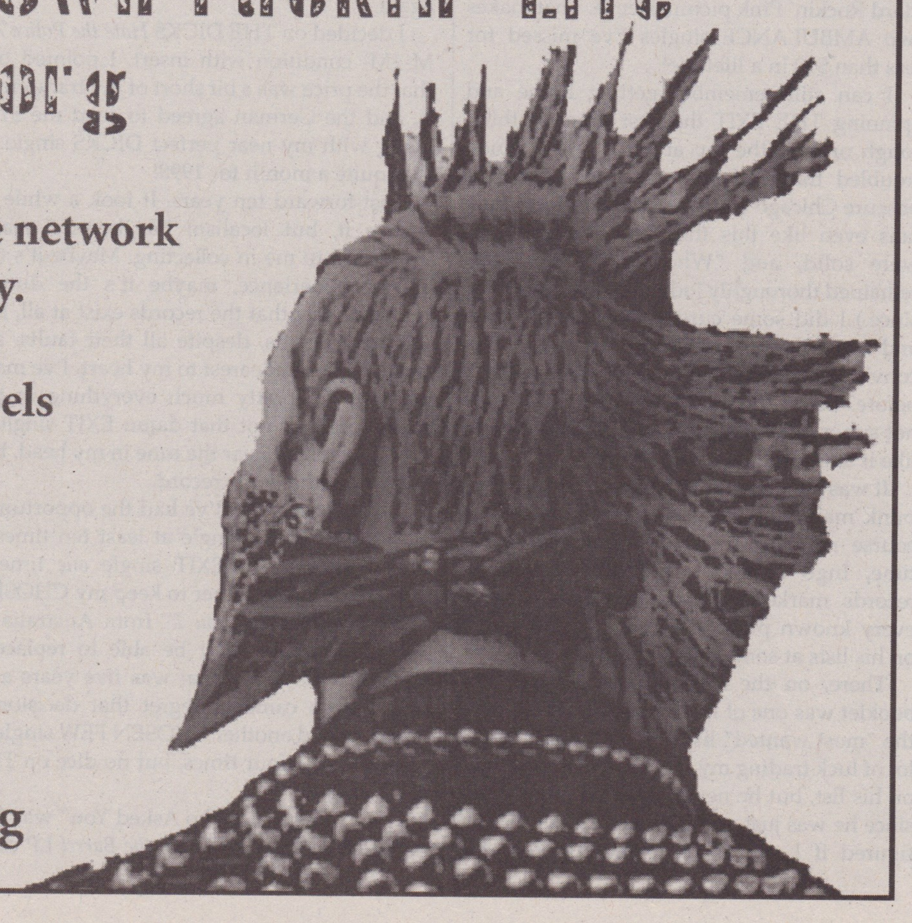

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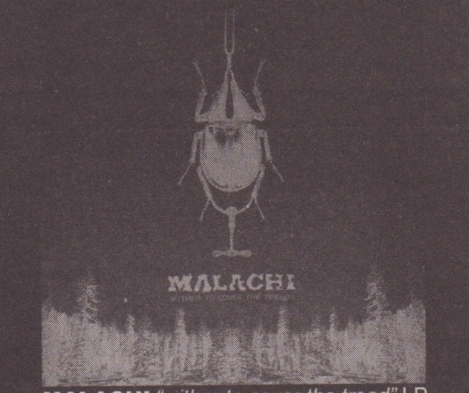

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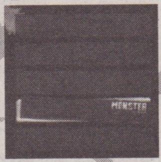

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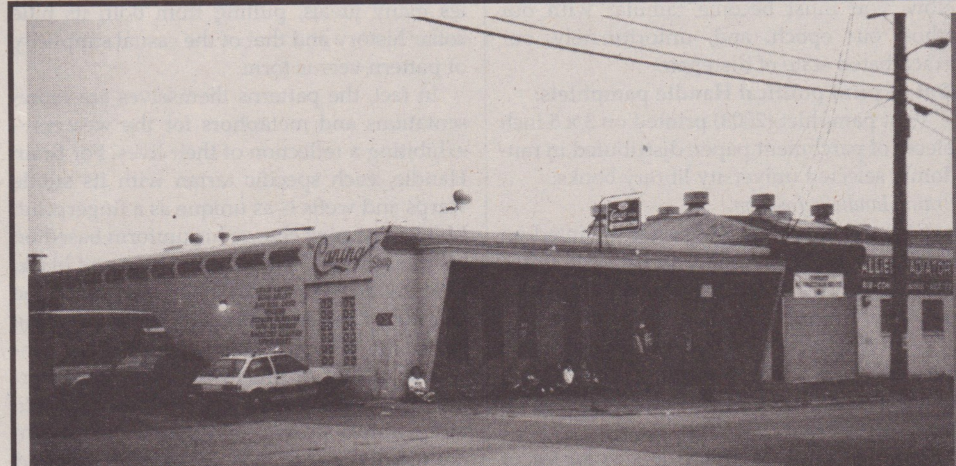

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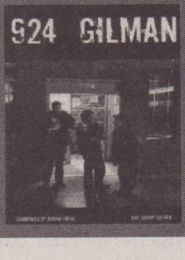


"Gilman changes people's lives. It gives them inspiration; it gives them hope. It's what holds some people together when life is tearing them apart. It shows them that there are things in the world to care about, to take responsibility for. It instills in them the sense that some things do matter, and perhaps most importantly, that they themselves matter, especially those who've been told they would never amount to anything. How does Gilman do this? Simply by providing an opportunity that people can run with, or not, as they choose to. It is, after all, only a building. But it's the people that take advantage of this opportunity that have made Gilman special, magical. These people are what this book is about." -- Brian E. '04 (excerpt from 924 Gilman book)

more effectively than the printed pages in which they're embedded. That's why a good editorial cartoon is worth a thousand editorials. On their own, as comic books, graphic novels, and the like, they can convey most anything a short story or novel can, and then some. This is old news to people who are younger than me, but worth repeating anyway.

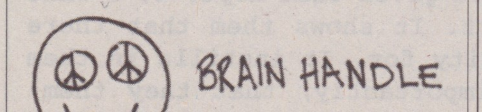
As a newspaper comics aficionado, I discovered that the *Oakland Tribune* printed their daily strips in color, and that the *LA Times* had not just two plus pages of daily black and white comics, but two full sections of color comics on Sunday. Heaven! On line, the *Washington Post* has a pretty good, free comics section. That's where I ran into the September 27, 2008, "Tom the Dancing Bug" by Ruben Bolling.

Entitled "Today's USA is the USSR of the 1980s," the comic draws hilarious, not to mention striking parallels between present day America and a bygone Soviet Union. There's state ownership of a command economy, secret police spying on citizens, loyalty oaths and mandatory patriotism, a military quagmire in Afghanistan, and an economy going to hell in a hand basket. What particularly tickled me was the last panel: "Next: The Breakup of the Empire." Depicted is the front page of the *New York Times* with a report that the USA has been reduced to its original thirteen colonies. The *Anchorage Daily News* features a President Todd Palin declaring Alaska an independent nation.

Clever stuff.

I do a lot of on-line news and information gathering, but I also peruse physical copies of the *New York Times* and the *Wall Street Journal* for ruling-class news and opinion at my local public library. Remember libraries? I also subscribe to the *Guardian Weekly*, to get the acceptable leftist slant on things. All serious newspapers, with no comics sections. Deep down though, I guess I don't feel a newspaper is really worth much without comics.

PERSONAL PROPAGANDA... To find out my real name purchase my book, *End Time*, from AK Press (POB 40682, SF, CA 94140-0682) for $10. The book is called *Fim* in Portuguese and can be ordered from Conrad Editora (R. Maracaí, 185, Aclimação, 01534-030, São Paulo-SP, Brasil) for R$ 24,90. I can be contacted at hooligent sia@mac.com.



Message #1: Brain Handle enters.

My friends, I am Maple Leaf—the frontperson, but not leader, of Brain Handle. You ask: "Who is Brain Handle?" Brain Handle is sensationalized nothing. Wherever we go, the rallying call is "Brain handle is here. Everyone stop partying." Brain Handle will play your favorite song and it will sound nothing like your favorite song. Members of the group will smoke drugs with you. Members of the group will not smoke drugs with you. It is the year 2008. Brain Handle will hold hands with you. Brain Handle will fist fight conservatives and liberals. Brain Handle will request to stay home from work. Brain Handle will spell "Brain Handle" incorrectly. Brain Handle will rent a DVD, go home, and realize that Brain Handle does not own a television set. Brain Handle will play *Shoots and Ladders* with you. Brain Handle will call you on the telephone. Brain Handle enters.

I welcome you with an open embrace to the first transmission from the Brain Handle Camp, secretly operated from the depths of our shared basement apartment. Through many late-night correspondences with the workers of this magazine, it has been decided that our often censored and destroyed manifestos, manuscripts, and political pamphlets be leaked to the underground through *Maximum Rocknroll*. Many readers may be familiar with the music of Brain Handle. Now, you must become familiar with our ethos, our epoch, and, unfortunately, our exacerbated state of disrepair.

Out of print political Handle pamphlets:

First pamphlet (2003) printed on 3 x 5 inch pieces of parchment paper, distributed in randomly selected university library books:
Brain Handle is freedom.

Second pamphlet (2005) screen-printed on a brown paper bag left in record stores throughout the United States of AmeriKKKa on our first US tour:
The root of freedom is not the road. Highways are numbered for your enslavement.

Third pamphlet printed on recycled paper, never distributed:
All printed material is soaked through the teat of The Machine. All anarchic and progressive texts and pamphlets have been processed, manufactured, and printed by robotic counterparts.

There is a storm against peace. The global fathom of darkness brews an error of misfortune and doom. This is an error that Brain Handle will not allow to progress any further. Paranoia runs deep. Let it. Fill yourself with it. Take direct action. Walk into a Wal-Mart. Walk into a 7-11. Go to the library. Go to the museum. Ride the Ferris wheel. Drive 34 hours just to smell the fresh air. Achieve peace through the distortion of popular media. Achieve peace through the distortion of popular practices.

Now, a segment from Robble Robble's locally published subversive piece on the merits of flannel and how it relates to the Brain Handle Camp:

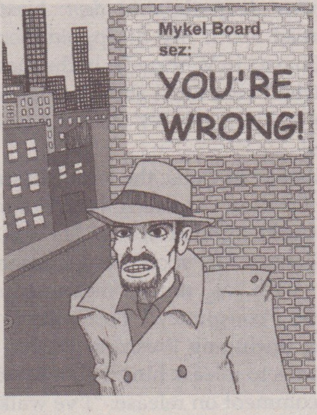
"Pontifications on the Virtues of Flannel" by Robble Robble, of renowned Pittsburgh group, Brain Handle, written in the interest of the Pittsburgh Fashion Assembly's Quarterly Imprint.

Throughout the course of human history, many modes and style of dress have come in and out of vogue. Some are bound to the ages and others are flash-in-the-pan trends that provide a humorous footnote to the evolution of fashion. Upon some cursory research, it was discovered that flannel rose to popularity sometime in the late 19th and early 20th centuries as a cheap, warm fabric of both the flammable and non-flammable variety. In America, the fabric has been woven into our history of rugged individualism, as typified by lumberjacks, farmers and grungers. Although this wonderful fabric has been used to create bed sheets, undergarments and kilts, the most well-loved article of clothing constructed of this fine fabric is the flannel shirt.

What is there that one cannot say about a flannel shirt? It is of sturdy construction, warm, makes the wearer look tough, provides camouflage at convocations of slacking, can be found for cheap in any thrift store and is synonymous with rocking hard. In short, this mode of dress defines a lifestyle and embodies many ideals, pulling from both its blue collar history and that of the casual simplicity of pattern versus form.

In fact, the patterns themselves are representations and metaphors for the wearers—exhibiting a reflection of their lives. For Brain Handle, each specific tartan with its subtle warps and wefts is as unique as a fingerprint. Maple Leaf may choose his uniform based on his thoughts or feelings…red, gold and black, to show deep reflection and concern for the passing of the sun. And 2x4, while covering his tie-dye t-shirt, may choose a pattern consisting mostly of green, to reflect his innermost desires for world peace and the return to more simple times. As shown in these two examples, many things can be communicated through flannel. On some occasions, the band's set list has been determined simply by the clockwise alignment of patterns and their resultant interplay and energies.

It is through these collective interactions that Brain Handle's artistic revelation has reached fruition. Although this flannel language is used to promote peace in all aspects of one's existence, it is also a declaration of war against false villains that would rather wear fabricated, thin plaid in place of fabric woven with passion and substance. Flannel is not an ultimate truth, but an individual truth and a reflection of belief. When combined with community and creativity, such a material can embody the melding of individual and group vision in single, potent outbursts. In the face of pedestrian art and sound, Brain Handle has chosen to weave a deeper tapestry of color and texture, as demonstrated in the donning of flannel.



"Travel is pointless without certain risks." —Paul Theroux

I was happier than a foot fetishist in a shoe store. A month. Travel. Adventure. Sex? Booze. *No work*. Hooeey!

The plan: One week in Trinidad; two in Venezuela. Then back to T'dad for another week. Aooogah!

Trinidad, actually Trinidad *and* Tobago, are two small islands—the southernmost volcano tops poke through the Atlantic in a sideways J. Seven miles from South America. You can spit to Venezuela. Maybe you should.

If you've heard of Trinidad at all, you know *Carnival*. You probably also know the *Steel Pan*—a percussion instrument made from a cut oil drum. The Trinis tune it to make notes when you hit it with a mallet.

Venezuela is the land of oil and Hugo Chavez. Maybe you like the guy. He called W, *The Great Satan*. He gave free oil to poor people in New England. He built schools in Nicaragua. The US government and press hate him. He must be good, right?

Hmm, I'll tell you later.

As I write this, I sit in THINK café. It's a local (NYC local) coffee shop. Coffeecally correct (free trade, free internet, recycling, with face-pierced clerks and Bob Dylan on the stereo), it's my closest comfortable writing location.

To experience my adventures in the Caribbean you'll have to join me in my testicular time machine. Climb in, I know it's cramped, but you'll make it. You in? Seated? Come on, squeeze! There's still room behind that vas deferen. Ready? Now the stroke. That's it! A little more! Aaaah. ... a spurt to the past.

August 15, 2008.

I've just arrived at the airport in Trinidad. A long trip—New York to Atlanta—a two-hour wait, then four more hours to this land of two million brown-skinned angels.

I have a hotel reserved. A guesthouse actually. $35 a night. One night. Then, on to couch surf in the countryside. I figure a guesthouse will look better to the immigration officer than the address of some stranger I've never met.

It doesn't matter. The immigration guy says, "Enjoy your stay in Trinidad," and waves me through. He doesn't care.

Outside the airport I wait for the guys from ANTI-EVERYTHING, a Trini punk band I found on MySpace. I'm half an hour late. I hope they didn't give up.

I call Randy, the guitar player.

"Hey man," (he pronounces it *mahn,* like Jamaicans), "you here?"

"Yep," I say, looking around at the plenum of people surrounding me. Everyone looks Negro or Indian—or some combination. I feel like I'm in the Harlem of Calcutta. And good-looking? Yow! Hubba hubba.

"I'm at the airport, a little late, but here,"

"We on our way," says Randy. "See you soon."

I wait by the curb. A big Negress sits on her suitcase. She talks to me.

"Oh," she says, "If you take a taxi, make sure you ask one of the guys in white shirts. They'll take you where you want to go. The others..."

"OK," I say, "you waiting for someone?"

"My sister," says the woman. "She was supposed to be here an hour ago. She knows... This your first time in Trinidad?"

I nod.

"You'll have a good time," she says. "Just watch your back."

Eventually, her sister shows up. I'm standing there at the curb. I'm tired from the plane ride. My neck hurts from the strain of trying to watch my back. My new friends haven't...

Here comes a car—an old beater. Ford? Chevy? A young guy with a ponytail rides half out the back window. His arms raised in the air.

"Mykel! Mykel!" he's shouting, as the car rounds the curve on two wheels.

I wave.

The car screeches to a halt in front of me.

The front door opens and this young guy with glasses and a scraggly beard gets out. He looks Indian, like most of the folks around. He gives me a hug like we're old friends.

"Randy?" I figure.

"Yah Mykel," he says. "Sorry we were late."

He opens the trunk and I throw in my bags. Then I get in the back seat. Next to Randy is a beautiful girl who looks like she's just stepped out of a *Bollywood* movie. Next to her is a big guy, an Indian with dreadlocks, friendlier than a puppy.

The attractive brown guy who was half out the window sits next to me in the back.

"Hey, Mahn," he says, "I'm Allan." He hands me a beer.

"You drink beer, mahn?" he asks.

"Does the Pope shit in the woods?" I say.

He doesn't get it. Who cares? He hands me a beer. And we're off.

Everybody in the car has a beer. Including Randy, a beer in one hand and the steering wheel in the other.

We plow through traffic: Sometimes on the right, sometimes on the left. I can't figure out which side these people drive on. I don't think it matters. It's a dodge 'em crash 'em car chase. Whiz. Screech. Dodge that truck. Quick turn. There goes the beer. Who cares? There's more where that came from.

Allan is on about something. He's gesturing, talking a light-year a second. He mentions *bops*. Watch out for 'em. (I later learn that *bops* are policemen. Probably rhyming slang with *cops*.) I should try some *babash*. I'll never get it in New York. Something *vex him* (that I can sorta figure out). Something *semi demi* happened. He's not interested in any *mampy*. And look at that *jagabat* out the window there. Yowsah! What language is this?

Randy talks a little more normally.

"I guess you're tired," he says. "I'll drop you off at the hotel and see you tomorrow."

"You don't want to be limin'?" asks Allan.

"Lime-ing?" I ask. "You mean like having a piece of green fruit?"

The others laugh.

"Limin', limin'" says Allan.

"It's like hanging out," explains Randy. "You know, just drinking and hanging out with people and..."

"Oh yeah," I tell him. "I really want to lime. I want to see everything."

"OK," says Randy, now nearing the guesthouse. "We'll pick you up at eight."

"Sure," I tell him.

At ten o'clock, they show up.

Out we go, same people in the car. We're off to *someplace*.

"Ghetto mahn," says Allan.

On the way, at every stop, (not stoplight or stop sign—those don't mean anything. But just where we *have* to stop because the car in front of us stopped, and there is another car on the right and left), Allan rolls down the window and yells at the passers by.

"Chinkies?" he says. "You (unintelligible) Chinkies?"

I'm worried I've discovered some kind of anti-Chinese racism.

Some people shrug. Some people point. The car careens ever forward.

We end up on a sidewalk on a side street. The main street itself is the loudest street I've ever heard. Competing music: socca, calypso, soul, rap, hip-hop, what the fuck? All at volumes high enough to drown a jet engine.

We pile out of the car. Allan accosts a passer-by, a young woman more black than

Indian-looking. She's got a pair of buttocks that you wish would invite you to move in between and take up residence.

"Chinkies? Chinkies?" he asks.

The woman smiles and points. We're off.

It turns out Chinkies is an outdoor stand (a chain?) where they make lots of things with lots of pepper in them. Everybody buys one of something.

"What should I ask for?" I ask Randy, reaching for my wallet.

He shoves a paper-wrapped something in my hand.

"You're with us," he says. "You don't pay."

I take a bite of something really messy and really delicious. It drips brown out of the thin paper and down my arm. I run my tongue over my arm, scooping up the sauce. It's peppery with the bite that Indian food should have, but rarely has among the pepper wimps in New York.

With the delicious something still in hand, we approach a bar.

"Shouldn't I finish this food first?" I say.

"Why?" asks Randy, "It goes better with drink."

Turns out, in Trinidad, you can buy food one place and bring it into another. You can buy booze one place, bring it into another or just drink it on the street. Except for my passport on entering the country, I had to show my ID exactly *no times* in Trinidad.

"You want a Stag?" asks Bryan.

Do I know? A stag could turn out to be anything, but what the fuck?

"Sure," I say.

It's a beer—*the man's beer.*

We walk, drink, eat, look at girls, talk and get drunker. Go limin'. Lime some more.

I pull my digital camera from its holster and shoot the scene.

"Be careful with your camera," says Bryan. "It's not so safe around here."

I am not careful.

All in all it's the best first night I've had in a country where I didn't get laid. I wasn't allowed to spend a cent. I was completely plastered. Filled with Chinkie's *chicken with peppah.* Smiling a mile a minute, completely unaware of how I got back to the guesthouse.

The next morning—late morning—I'm having breakfast in the guesthouse restaurant. The *Daily Express* is there for the perusing. Headlines: "Dengue Fever Outbreak," inside: "Brazen Murder in City," next page: "Chopping Suspect on the Run."

I put the paper aside and pick up *The Guardian.* Headline: "52 Killers Escape Hangman." Yowsah.

In October 2005, there was a march on the capital of Trinidad to protest the rising crime rate. Three hundred and five people, dressed in white, laid down in the street to symbolize the number murdered that year. That's a huge number, considering the population of the whole country is less than the number of people who live in Manhattan. In 2005, there were fewer than 100 murders in Manhattan.

"Watch your back," the guesthouse clerk tells me. "Trinidad has a really high crime rate. More than 400 murders so far this year." And it's only September.

So I'm thinking. OK, you have a free country. No traffic police. No drinking age. Never show an ID. No TV cameras on the street. No fingerprinting visitors. Really free. But are you paying for that freedom with murder?

Later in the trip, I ask Bryan about it.

"You got it," he says. "I was in Florida once. I felt like I couldn't do anything. I needed an ID to rent a videotape. I was carded, watched, everything. But, I guess I was safe. Here, we are freer, but the price for bops that don't care is crime."

After a night at the guesthouse, I move in with a New York born Jew who worked in the diamond business. He retired at 40, married a Trini woman (who wouldn't?), built a mansion with a swimming pool and servant's house. I had my own room.

"What do I want with America?" he says. "You have no freedom. You have no healthcare. People are stupid... and ugly."

"So you want to stay here?" I ask him.

"Sure," he says, "The only problem is the crime."

I'm thinking about this as I get on the airplane for Caracas, Venezuela. I'm thinking about how freedom maybe isn't so free if you always have to watch your back. It'll be interesting to see what it's like in a more controlled country. See how my idol, Chavez, keeps control. What kind of freedom do the people have there? Should I be willing to give up the quest for freedom for a tad of security?

On the other hand, *I* never felt in danger in Trinidad. My rich Jew host in his mansion never locked the door. The people in his little town all know—and watch out for—each other. I donno. It's a tough problem.

I don't sleep the night before the Venezuela flight. I'm out limin' with the gang. Then Randy brings me to the airport.

I get on the plane for the twenty-minute ride to Caracas and pass out.

ENDNOTES: [email subscribers (god@mykelboard.com) or website viewers (www.mykelboard.com) will get live links and a chance to email comment on the column.]

—>*Ho ho ho dept:* Jim Hass sends me a clipping about a 52-year-old man who was convicted of beating an elderly street minister to death in downtown Atlanta in 2004. Prosecutors said the killer was dressed as Santa Claus at the time of the attack.

—>*Contact dept:* My new friends in Trinidad and Venezuela need *contacts.* Help bring them into the world. Look for the Trinis on MySpace under their band name: ANTI-EVERYTHING. You can find the Venezuelans on MySpace at APATIA NO!, or email 'em at: apatia_no@gmx.net.

—>*Another disappointment dept:* Next week you'll read about my disappointment with Hugo Chavez in Venezuela. In the meantime, Ms. S, who I've written about before, sent me a clipping from the *NY Times, International* edition.

Seems like in Cuba, the Raoul Castro government couldn't stomach the lyrics of punk rocker Gorki Aguila Carasco. He was arrested at a concert for "social dangerousness"—a charge with as much meaning as the American "conspiracy." Fortunately, public pressure (including President Bush!), forced the Cubans to release him with a $28 fine.

His comment on release: "I've walked out of the small cage, into the big one."

—>*Hole in my theory department:* I usually never go to places that tell you how great they are. I'd never shop in a store that calls itself *Best Buys.* I won't eat in a *Delicious Diner*. Or buy shoes at the *Wonderful Shoe Shop.* I figure if a store needs to name itself *Best, Wonderful* or Terrific, it's not.

But in Trinidad, where everything is great anyway, I went to the *Excellent Stores Shopping Center* to use the internet café. Nothing special, right? I just walk up to the counter, pay the attractive girl $15 in Trini dollars (about three US dollars), plug in and surf.

The first week of my Trinidad visit, I do this exactly twice. Mundane, boring task, right? Hooey!

I leave Trinidad for two weeks in Venezuela. When I return, I go to the internet cafe. The same girl is behind the counter.

"Hi!" she says with a smile from Port of Spain to Hicksville New York. "It's great to see you again! Where have you been?"

I'm her long lost friend. After two visits. Less than five minutes of commercial intercourse. And suddenly we're pals. Yowsah! What can I say, but *excellent!*

—>*I wonder if it's full of shit dept:* It's called *The Colossal Colon,* and it was on display at the Indiana State Fair. It's a 40-foot-long model of the human colon. Visitors can crawl through it and experience what it must be like for a real live turd. No word on which politicians or talk show personalities have made the trek.

—>*Really bad timing dept:* I think it was Jim Haas who sent me the article about Greyhound Canada pulling its ads. The ad campaign featured happy bus travelers with the tag line: *There's a reason you've never heard of bus rage.*

The ad was pulled after Vince Li, a recent immigrant to Canada, was charged with murder. The guy allegedly attacked another bus passenger, stabbing him several times. As the other passengers fled the bus, Li severed his victim's head, displaying it to the passengers outside. A police officer at the scene said that he saw Li "hacking off pieces of the victim's body... and eating them."

BRACE BELDEN is THE LAST PUNK

Disappointment comes in waves. Sometimes, it takes the form of shallow spit, barely grazing me, present, yes, but only slightly so. Other times it's an ocean, an endless shit-sea enveloping my ample frame with ease. Tonight, it's flowed into a mid-point, appearing as a murky, scummy puddle, right in front of me. I raise my foot upwards and bring it down sharply, stepping dead centre in the middle of it. I am soaked to the bone by this puddle. The Roman goddess Fortuna, noted scholar Ignatius Reilly claims, spins her wheel, determining life's luck. Tonight, Fortuna, she spins.

Tonight, I went to an art show.

Tonight, I surveyed my surroundings with a mix of incredulity and hot spite.

Tonight, I complained.

Tonight, I took a shit.

Tonight, I went to an art show. Today I woke up, completely naked. When I'm drunk, stone-drunk, as I was last night, I (for reasons unknown) will strip naked before I sleep. This makes little sense. I hate sleeping nude, and even post-coitus I prefer to don my undergarments and a t-shirt before I drift off. I woke up. Fortuna spins immediately, her direction uncertain.

I walk around, naked. My dick droops, I piss out of it (into the toilet), I look at it. I walk back in my room. I listen to John Mayall. I don't know why. Fortuna stays her hand.

My telephone rang. I pick it up. Lady Fortuna, with her soft, smooth hands, delicately thrusts the wheel into motion. It's direction, again, is indiscernible.

I eat a sandwich with Colin.

I went to Dolores Park with Colin. I do this because I am an idiot. We drank one large beer, each.

Aaron Hall shows up at the park. He is taller than me, as is Colin. A lot of people are taller than me, though I'm not short. I have a friend named Max, and Max is short. He doesn't like it, nor does he like tall people. I'm ambivalent, though I can see where he's coming from. Fortuna spins even for Max, her lithe, cruel hands barely grazing the wooden wheel. Max is doing well, with college, a steady gal, and a not-bad job. Though he may, in moments of self-sorrow or personal pity, claim otherwise, Fortuna is intent on spinning his wheel in a long, upward route. Max was not at the park. I suspect he would've felt uncomfortable.

The three of us sit, for two hours.

We leave. An air show takes place overhead. Fortuna spins her wheel. There is no crash.

Eric Burdon sang of warm San Francisco nights, and thousands of locals laughed at his ignorance. Tonight, as every night, it was not warm in San Francisco. Aaron Hall's house was warm. We listened to the new Cock Sparrer record, which he claims is OK. We listened to the new Fucked Up album. He did not claim this was good. Cock Sparrer sings of Suicide Girls in one song, Fucked Up of a Royal Swan in another. For Fucked Up, Fortuna spins. Downward. I suspect she's stayed her hand in Cock Sparrer's case. Luck makes no difference if you're pushing fifty, so the saying goes.

We leave Aaron Hall's house. I am slightly drunk. Fortuna spins. A burrito, across the street. The wheels course is clear: Upwards.

We attend an art show. Fortuna, she spins again, this time violently, this time downwards.

Hamburger Eyes is the name of the place. Forget it.

I stand in a corner, Aaron Hall, Zane Morris, Daniel Rincon surrounding me. Colin has left for band practice. Fortuna spins, for him.

Why do I come to these places? I dislike "art" (if taking pictures of your friends naked is art). I dislike people who come to these events. I dislike the florescent lights, the grazing girls and gazing guys. I don't like any of it. Risking repetition, I'll say again that they make me sick. Physically so. They're having a great time, preparing for the real show, the after-hours bar party where they'll get to really let loose, maybe grab-grope each other in exchange for parcels of cocaine or bragging rights to their friends the next day (over beers at Dolores park, of course). The other night, Colin saw a girl give a blowjob to a cocaine dealer in a car in front of the bar he works at. Fortuna's wheel, and who but her knows the direction it spins?

I do. It spins down. I take the bus home. I'm here now. My column is late.

ALL FOREIGN JUNK

My Finnish buddy Teemu sent me a couple CDs of bands he plays in Finland: THE HEARTBURNS and KAKKA-HATA 77. I'll skim over THE HEARTBURNS because they didn't really do anything for me, but if you like anthemic guitar-driven punk rock from Europe at the moment—and I mean a *lot*—like NO HOPE FOR THE KIDS are your favourite band and you read Hans Christen Andersen fairytales every night before bed just to feel closer to those Danish types, then I'd say THE HEARTBURNS should be on your radar.

KAKKA-HATTA 77 has a little more appeal; they're a little more ignorant sounding, relying on really obvious guitar leads and ending songs right before most bands would put a bridge in. Which means they're stunted and kind of half-catchy, which is to say they're doing it right in my book. I like them a lot and highly recommend them, and this CD is a compilation of their stuff titled "Totaalinen Kakkahata." It's anthemic, but retarded anthemic, like all great oi! music.

Oh yeah, when I said Teemu was my buddy before, I was lying. I tried to email him to thank him for his package, but his email address was too long and illegible and there are far too many vowels in the Finnish language for me to get my head around. Teemu, if you're reading this, send me an email, or a postcard with your email address clearly printed, and maybe try to get more consonants in there. I'd suggest the letter "s"— it looks nice next to anything. Here's a Finnish scene report courtesy of Teemu:

"Old punx keep dying and winter is coming so it's depressing as fuck. Listening to SUICIDE now..." Right on, Teemu. A real Finnish man.

Earlier this year a couple Australian bands—CUT SICK and CRUX—toured Southeast Asia. It's a pretty overlooked area of the world as far as punk goes, so when an Australian band goes there you can consider the international interest outside this to be insignificant. I asked CRUX guitarist and road warrior Lex Von Hall to give me a report on the tour for the benefit of *MRR* readers from all corners of the globe, and here's what he threw at me:

"Different. When people ask me what it was like playing shows in SE Asia, that's usually the first word I throw into the conversation. Beyond that, other adjectives I would use to describe the situation would be awesome, eye opening, stressful, exciting and memorable.

"In June/July this year, my band CRUX, from Sydney, Australia, decided to tour Southeast Asia. Why SE Asia, rather than the more beaten paths of Europe or North America? The answer, simply, was that we wanted to tour, and having played almost every feasible place in Australia, and having already been across the Tasman sea to New Zealand, we would be far better off going somewhere that isn't constantly inundated with touring bands, and where an unknown band from Australia might actually go over ok (if they played well enough!).

"I know first hand how much kids in America really don't give a shit about touring bands unless they're the latest hyped flavour of the month, and since we don't play retro '80s style US hardcore there wasn't much point going there!

"First off, all the shows were great, without exception. Lachie, our guitarist (who did a great job) booked the whole tour using contacts supplied by our good friend and Malaysian exile, Yeap from PISSCHRIST. These days, it seems as though all the kids over there use MySpace, so if you want to tour there, you'd better suck it up and get yourself an account through which to contact people.

"We played in Singapore, Malaysia, Philippines and Indonesia, doing fourteen shows total: one in Singapore, three in Malaysia, three in the Philippines and seven in Indonesia. In the end we couldn't fit in Thailand (which was also kicked around as an option) simply because of time concerns.

"People's hospitality was the most noticeable thing in every country we went to, and the whole tour was only as great as it was because of the huge effort nearly everyone we dealt with in each country made in making sure we were comfortable, well fed and generally looked after. Sometimes the level of people's generosity and hospitality made us feel a little uncomfortable. After all, these are much poorer countries than Australia, and even the more well off kids don't have nearly as much disposable income as people in more developed countries, which makes it a little embarrassing when they're refusing to let you pay for food or travel. Once again, thank you to everyone who helped us out!

"The different countries: Singapore was definitely the place most similar to Sydney, so it was no surprise that the show there was the most similar to those we would play in Australia, though with more people than we would generally play to!

"The most notable aspect of shows here was the high level of women present in the bands and setting up the shows, as compared with the rest of Asia, where hardly any of the bands we played with had women in them, and there were hardly any women at shows. Singapore was a welcome change from this, with most of the bands we played with having at least one woman. Some of the great bands we played with here included PAZAHORA (tragedy style epic crust) and MY PRECIOUS (melodic hardcore/screamo).

"Our Malaysian shows all had pretty varied line-ups and definitely featured some of the best bands of the tour. Getting to play with CARBURETOR DUNG in Penang was a great honour, as they have been playing since the early '90s, and are seen by many as the forefathers of punk in Malaysia. That particular shows was full of skinheads— something I certainly didn't expect to see in Asia, but I was told that while there had been problems with racist skins in the past (so called brown-power skins), this particular group was of the anti-fascist variety (a good thing for us in view of our Vietnamese-born vocalist!). My favorite band in Malaysia (and perhaps of the whole tour) was KA-ROE-SHI, who pounded out some heavy-as-fuck hardcore/sludge in the vein of HIS HERO IS GONE. Other awesome bands included: INFINITE DELAY (DISCORDANCE AXIS-style grind), DAIGHLIA (fast, heavy screamo), and BLOOD ON WEDDING DRESS (powerviolence/thrash).

"The Philippines was the poorest seeming country we visited (thank you Catholic church's opposition to birth control!), though the intense poverty we saw on the streets of Manila was contrasted by the frequency of rich American style malls, complete with security at every entrance to check through people's bags and prevent "terrorist" attacks.

The two shows we played in Manila, and the one show in neighbouring Malalos, all featured at least ten bands—though the shows themselves were not as long as you might think since all the bands shared the same equipment (owned by the clubs) and only played three or four songs each. Kids here were especially excited to see bands from overseas, and really went nuts on the dance floor. Some of the better bands included BYSTORM (Metallic fast hardcore) and DISABUSE (D-beat crust).

"Indonesia was where we spent the most time and saw the most bands. Like the Philippines, the shows were long and packed with bands. The most noticeable aspect of shows in Indonesia however, is the sheer amount of punks at shows. Most shows had hundreds of punks, and when I say punks, I mean it; totally mohawked and leather jacketed punks were everywhere, and the organizers of some of the shows were apologizing to us for the low turnouts! This goes to show how huge punk is in Indonesia (it's even mentioned in the *Lonely Planet* guide I had!), possibly because Indonesia itself is such a populous country.

We played in Java, the island with the most people on it, and in Kalimantan (Indonesian Borneo). Apparently we were the only foreign punk band to play in Kalimantan apart from RAMBO, and it's certainly a place I would recommend more bands visit. There were so many great bands we played with it's hard to only name a few, but some of the ones that spring to mind are BLEARGHHH! (slap-a-ham powerviolence), HELLOWAR (dark, heavy crust), KONTRASOCIAL (D-beat punk), and BLACK BOOTS (melodic punk rock).

"Though there seems to be more and more interest in touring SE Asia (CUT SICK, MARGRUDERGRIND, and GRAF ORLOCK were all foreign bands that were on tour around the same time we were), as far as punk goes it's still a very much overlooked corner of the world. I can't recommend touring there highly enough. If you're interested I recommend getting in touch with the following people who helped us, and maybe they can help you or put you in touch with others who can:

Singapore—Shaiful (Prohibited Projects)
prohibitedprojects @gmail.com
Malaysia—Kid (Mass Sepparation/Ka-Roe-Shi)
www.myspace.com/massseparation
Philippines—Sampcore Collective
www.myspace.com/sampcore
Indonesia—Pyrate Punx
www.myspace.com/bandungpyratepunx
Big thanx to everyone that helped out!"

If you play punk, hardcore, garage noise, or any music with a bit of grit and rawness to it, or if you write a fanzine that loosely covers the same sonic territory, and you *don't* live in the US, Japan. or Sweden, get in touch. My address is DANIEL STEWART: PO BOX 239, NORTH CARLTON, VICTORIA 3054, AUSTRALIA. If you'd like to email me, try distorttheworld@gmail.com.

By John Fahey

GUEST COLUMN

Exclusive Punks Will Die—Part 3: Exclusive Distribution

An Interview with Bob Suren (Burrito Records/Sound Idea Record Store and Distro)

Before *MRR* put out the excellent "Is Business Killing Punk?" issues a while back, the notion of exclusive distribution, the practice of labels selling exclusively through one distro, had struck me as being pretty shady.

Exclusive distribution to me seemed to reek of greed and not jive with DIY ethics whatsoever. Why would a label try to corner the market on certain band's and label's releases other than to tack on whatever charge they want and profit?

Now, I also have no background in running a large label that would strike such a deal, nor have I any background in running a large distro that would seek out labels to wholesale exclusively, so I decided to track down someone that had some experience and ask them what they thought of the whole set-up.

The first person to come to mind was my neighbor to the north, Bob Suren. Up until October 18th of 2008, Bob ran Sound Idea distribution and record store in Brandon, Florida, as well as his own label, Burrito Records. For people unfamiliar with either of those institutions, Bob also sang for the band Failure Face and currently sings for Murder-Suicide Pact, who has recently re-formed. I figured Bob could see the argument for and against exclusive distribution from all sides because of his background with pretty much every angle of releasing and distributing a record—band to label, label to distro, distro to store, and store to customer.

Though this interview was conducted months and months ago, I think it's somewhat fitting that this column and interview appear the month after Suren's departure from the hardcore music business. How great a part did issues like exclusive distribution play a part in a DIY powerhouse like Sound Idea going out of business? Unbelievably, Bob kept the store, label, showspace, distro running for over fifteen years while practicing business with strict DIY principles in mind, totally uncorrupted. It's troubling to me that Sound Idea is not around anymore to be an example of those principles, and the success that was possible without resorting to greedy bullshit. Bob's answers pretty much made me feel like my initial feelings about exclusive distribution were right on...

MRR: How do you think exclusive distribution is beneficial to an independent label?

Bob Suren: Well, from a label's point of view, it doesn't make much sense because it's a case of putting all of your eggs in one basket. Throughout the '80s and '90s, a lot of record labels trusted their entire business to distributors that went bankrupt and left a lot of people totally fucked. Some of the bigger ones like SST and Alternative Tentacles were able to get through that OK, but a lot of smaller ones got totally fucked out of existence by distributors who basically had all the product, got far behind on their payments, and just disappeared without a trace. I was talking to the guy from Mystic Records who said that when a particular distributor went out of business in the '80s, they owed Mystic $80,000. So, working with one distro I don't think is a good move from a label's standpoint. I think labels should feel out distros and work with ones they feel comfortable with. It may be a combination of three, four, seven distributors that are all reliable, and they all have different client bases. If you were to give all product to one exclusive distributor, he may not be able to reach all the stores and distros. If you're working with multiple distributors, you'll have better coverage. You're going to have some overlapping, like Sound Idea might sell to the same clients as Lumberjack, and Lumberjack may sell to the same clients as Mordam, so in those cases the buyer gets to pick whoever they're more comfortable with or whoever has the best prices or service. So the overlapping isn't too big of an issue, and it might encourage distributors to be better distributors. There are a lot of good distributors out there who aren't going to fuck you over. I totally understand why distributors want to have exclusive distribution, because they get all the money. If you're the only guy in the fucking world that has the brand new Tragedy album you're going to make a lot of fucking money. I think distributors who seek out exclusive distribution are a little bit greedy.

MRR: Do you think it's contrary to DIY ethics?

Bob Suren: I would say so. I think that if distributors are specifically hunting out labels to get them into their stable they're doing it purely for business reasons and not for DIY reasons. To backtrack a little bit, I also think that the labels that choose exclusive distribution deals in many cases are just fucking lazy. They're too lazy to pack up ten boxes a month—they want to pack up one box a month. I understand that not everyone who runs a label can do it full-time...they have other obligations, job, family, other interests, hobbies. But personally, I think that if you run a DIY label, you shouldn't be that fucking lazy. I've railed against exclusive distribution for many years, and just recently somebody from a very large label came to me and said, "I'm kind of sick of all the people I've been dealing with. Do you want to take over my distribution"? And that kind of put me in an awkward position. This guy came to me and said, "…I'm either going to give all my shit to you, or you and another distro, in which case we may split it up like territories—East Coast and West Coast or Europe and North America." I don't know how it's going to work yet, but this very big label said they were sick of everyone dicking them around, lying to them, and being late with payments... I don't think it's the best scenario, but if that's what you want to do, go ahead. So when that happens it'll be good for me, but I didn't ask for it... I've never asked a label to only sell to me because I think that's fucked up. I think it's a little greedy.

MRR: With exclusive distribution deals, be it Mordam, Ebullition or whoever, do you know if it's a written contract or just a verbal deal?

Bob Suren: Ebullition's probably a handshake and a phone call, because that's the way that guy does things and I respect what he's doing. I know for a fact that some of the bigger distributors have a contract deal because I've had some labels come to me and say, "My contract's up, do you want to carry my stuff again"? I know one very popular label whose contract just expired with Lumberjack and they just switched to Ebullition. I was hoping when that happened they might cut me in on some of the action too but they just bypassed me and went entirely with Ebullition. I think selling to Ebullition is cool, I don't think it should be the only person you sell to. I think No Idea does a good job, along with Revolver, Profane Existence, Sound Idea, Revelation. There are several DIY distributors around that you can trust, I don't think you should put it all in one place.

MRR: So what is the bottom line for the kid buying a record in your store? If Sound Pollution sells their LPs for six dollars, or something, to the distributor, does that mean Ebullition adds on another two dollars and then some store adds on another two dollars?

Bob Suren: Whenever you buy through a distributor you're paying a middleman fee. With Sound Idea, I try to go direct with labels whenever possible, because that might mean I can buy and sell the LP two dollars cheaper to a customer. It might mean I can sell an LP for $8.50 instead of $10, or a 7" for $3.50 instead of $5. There are very few labels that won't deal direct. A few of them are tied up with Mordam-Lumberjack right now, so that's the only way I can get it. I'm trying to cut down the number of labels like that—there are maybe half a dozen labels I buy indirectly from.

MRR: What do you think about a band's position, like say a band starting out that puts out a record on 625 or Sound Pollution, is exclusive distribution going to inhibit who hears the record?

Bob Suren: The record isn't going to get to as many places as if the label dealt with more people and labels that don't trade. A lot of the labels that have exclusive distribution deals don't trade. I understand labels that don't trade, because they might not have a way to sell what they trade their records for—they just sell their own stuff mailorder or at shows and stuff. There's a lot of labels you hit up and they say, "Sorry, we don't trade."

MRR: But at least the records can still be bought wholesale.

Bob Suren: Yeah. Labels that trade get their stuff around better than anyone else. I'll tell you this—I have never taken cash for any of my label's titles from Europe. Every one of my records that's in Europe is from a trade, and every time I go to Europe I see my records all over the place and people that I know see my records in stores and distro boxes. It's all there through the barter system. I probably shift more records through bartering than most exclusive distributors will shift through cash sales. I have titles on Burrito Records that have moved four, five thousand copies and that's because I'll trade with almost anybody who asks.

MRR: Is there any other way you think exclusive distribution is a negative, or is there anything else you'd like to add?

Bob Suren: I just think from the late '80s on, I've seen punk rock get more and more commercial, more like a carbon copy or a little brother of the mainstream music scene. I'm starting to see small labels and independent distros resorting to mainstream music marketing tactics, and it kind of leaves a sickening taste in my mouth. There's a lot of labels that I thought were DIY that service big magazines like *Alternative Press* and *Spin*. I asked a particular label a while ago if they would share some of their promo contacts and I was shocked at some of the people that were on their promo list—*Kerrang, Metal Hammer, Alternative Press, Spin, Rolling Stone*...It's like, why would a DIY label send promo copies to *Spin, Rolling Stone,* and *Metal Maniacs*? My promo list is pretty much *MRR, Profane Existance, Heartattack, Slug and Lettuce,* and *Suburban Voice*. I've been seeing so many small labels looking really hungry and looking like they want to be bigger labels and doing stuff I never thought they would do ten years ago.

MRR: Thanks for the interview.

Bob Suren: Thanks.

ENDNOTES:

1. If anyone else would like to talk to me about this subject (or any correspondence) please email me at fahy_john@hotmail.com or write—15011 Lakeside View Dr / Apt 2402 / Fort Myers, FL 33919
2. My friend Nevin just bought a huge collection of records that has a lot of good shit in it, check it out and see if there's anything you want at www.ifbrecords.com.
3. Divisions and We Need To Talk records available from me for five bucks ppd at the above address. For info on these and other records available, visit my brand spanking new website, chump—www.humancrushrecords.com.
4. The Cult Ritual EP I spoke of last issue, released by my friend Chris, is almost gone, but he or I may have a few left—see the above website or www.druggedconscience.com
5. My horror movie zine is probably reviewed in this issue. It's called *Your Day Will Come* and it's a split zine with the great *Mixtapers Do It Better*. Send me a buck for one, or send me movies that are of a shocking nature so I can review them, or send me a submission for the third issue of the zine.
6. *Seven Inches To Freedom* #6 is a good ass zine. If you're from Florida it's even better. I'm not from Florida, I'm from Long Island, but I still like it a lot. Joe has made *Seven Inches to Freedom* shirts (all sizes) and glow-in-the-fucking-dark posters that have, like, half a dozen colors silk-screened on them. Buy some shit from him to get funds going for issue #7! Issue seven will be the "controversy" issue and among other eyebrow-raising subjects, I have an article about Born Against's ornery attitude and antics in there.

guest
by Marissa Magic
column.

I recently found myself at another punk get together where I only knew about two people but everyone in the room was familiar (this happens all the time). I sat in my normal spot on the periphery and bummed out amidst the music nerd-outs and punk dialogues that I don't get and/or don't care about. I felt like a total dork not knowing the majority of what they were referring to, and even then when I did know anything I had nothing to add.

Sometimes I just blame it on awkwardness; sometimes I just blame it on not actually being down with bro-ing down. And it's not like it just happens with punks either. I spent some years hanging around noise circles and that has the tendency to be mega bro down time. I was in this band and the few times we did get it together to tour around it was a pretty typical scene to be the only girl in any of the bands all night. Sometimes when there were other girls jamming out we would have an instant bond moment of "Whoa, we're both girls playing noise! Whoa!" But for the most part it was dude bro party after dude bro party and me in the corner reading feminist theory.

Anyways, after hanging with the boy punks and being kind of bummed that I was one of like five girls at the party, I ended the night at home alone and blaming my semi-bummer time on being awkward and hating it. I had a message in my inbox with a link to an old *Jigsaw* essay by Tobi Vail. I read it and then everything made sense. The essay is about hanging out with punk boys, and how punk girls end up feeling unimportant during guy scene nerd-outs, and how that's not intentional on their part but that girl scenes are just as important.

So there I was bummed about not keeping up when it shouldn't really apply. In Tobi's essay she talks about learning the role of Yoko Ono in The Beatles in a male construct, how Yoko "broke up The Beatles," how that applies to you (as a girl), and how it puts girls in a space that's always the opposite of the band. She explains how everything in the scene tends to be about the band (records, shows, tours), and the band tends to be dude dominated, so girls always end up being left out.

This is a bit of a random thought, but I've noticed that there's a tendency in feminism to equate equality with fitting in and being one in the same with dudes. It's really lame. Why try to fit into a culture that's alienating and that you're rebelling against, right? Why not elevate girl culture to a point of being just as important and valid? Set the context, right?

A couple days later I ended up in a feminist debate with some young boy after another bummer dance party. (I keep ending up in these situations where people get all nostalgic about bad mainstream '90s pop and rap, and they all want to dance to it, and all of a sudden everyone is losing their shit and booty dancing to like, R Kelly or something; and it's either like being at a dumb school dance, or it just reminds me of this party where somebody replaced The Wipers with some ironic bullshittery and Michelle Noel screamed *"This isn't punk!"* and then disappeared into the night.)

I was more of an all-inclusive type feminist in my younger years—not being able to imagine cutting dudes out of the process—since then I've gotten way separatist, and boys usually take insult at this. And then tell me I'm wrong. Good fucking job, dude. Anyways, I was talking to this boy about girl exclusive spaces, and how important that is, and going out of my way in the realms of art and music to support other ladies, and the boy told me that I was being detrimental to my gender by holding up the gender binary.

Yeah, right.

So somewhere off in the utopian la la land it would be really cool to be like, "Yeah I'm not going to support girl exclusive spaces, because if I don't support them, then the gender binary will, like, totally disappear, right? And equality will totally reign."

Yeeeeaaaahhhhh...

I'm sorry: I still get paid less on average. Random people still say shit like "That looks really heavy, do you want help with that?" or the classic "Be careful with your boyfriends gear," when I'm moving my amp or whatever. I get harassed on the street, and I all I want is to learn guitar from another girl to avoid all that boy pressure, and now I'm wrong? Again?

Where am I going with all this? Basically that I had this moment of affirmation that feeling alienated by the guy scene is not so new and surprising, and that my scene is just as real. Also, what a mega bummer that I found this affirmation, that applies to my life currently, in an essay written in 1991. It's like reading something that's basically saying, "Here comes the revolution," but now the revolution came and went. And some days it seems like things devolved and got apathetic to the point where I'm still wanting/needing that revolution.

And I always wonder about how everyone is apathetic now and girl punks don't really seem that united past casual conversations about this or that. And I wonder what the riot grrl climate was like, and if people were apathetic and fragmented or if it had all the excitement and energy that the documentaries show (I think this about most cultural movements caught on tape). Did they know how long it would be a big deal? Did they know what they were in the middle of?

Anyways, the point is that an essay written in 1991 could have been written yesterday, mainstream politics are scary as fuck now, and most of the time it seems like my peers are more interested in dancing to horrid nostalgia tunes than revolting. Which is one of the reasons that I always wonder if people were inherently different fifteen years ago, or if it's just a myth that everyone cared at one point. I don't know, from what I've seen, everyone seems apathetic and much more prone to mindless things (I have my moments too) now, and I think it's part of a dumbing down process pushed by mainstream America which puts all value in money and no value in thinking for oneself. Major bummer.

Enough of that—possibly more on that later.

Back to the noise thing for a couple moments: The whole time I existed there I felt like I was in a completely different dimension from my counterparts, which is why I eventually drifted out of it. I was constantly trying to bond with other noise girls and be like, "Fuck these dudes, let's start our own shit," and everyone tended to be kind of non-responsive. Don't get me wrong. There are some awesome noise feminist ladies out there who have created things like the *Ladyz in Noyz* comp or *Women Take Back the Noise*. But I think I was constantly expecting a girl revolution—partly because I always want that, but partly because I think there're a lot of parallels between hardcore and noise—there're a good amount of noise kids who cite hardcore as a major influence, and really if you just keep speeding hardcore up it eventually turns into harsh drone. So riot grrl was a reaction to sexism in the hardcore scene. But in noise, sexism is almost always passed off as being funny or neat sounding or ironic so it's ok.

Two types of things really stand out: the ubiquity in noise of totally fucked up band names and/or album art. It fucking blows my mind how many record covers by bands who are groups of dudes tend to be of naked girls. And I don't even get it—it's not even really shocking. It's just tired and boring and makes for a hostile environment when you're trying to sell your weird noise tape next to some dude who's selling a CDR that might as well be a fucking screen shot from a porn.

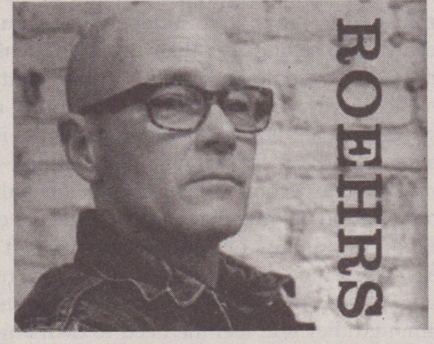
I'm totally not anti naked ladies, but with nudity context means so much, and I just don't understand the naked lady art thing—especially when it's coming from dudes who say fucked up things to be ironic or shocking—it's just boring and pointless hostility to me.

The second thing that stands out is the fact that there are so few girls, and little to no thought about what's going on in the actual music or performances. What I mean is that a lot of noise tends to be aggressive and totally dude dominated, and when girls did appear a lot of the time it tended to be like a weird passive scene, like dudes free-jazzing out through twenty thousand pedals and making this mega violent noise with one girl in the band rolling on the ground screaming, and it just felt like a visual of rape.

(Not to belittle or simplify rape at all. What I mean to say is that the sound of a woman screaming over a ton of harsh noise, coupled with a visual of a woman on her knees or laying on the ground with a bunch of dudes standing over her doing that rocking out herky-jerky thing strikes me as an abstract rape scene.)

And then you're of the girl minority standing in a room full of dudes rocking out, and there was never a moment of like "Uh, this is kind of fucked up." Just lots of "This is aaaawwweeeessssooommeee." And I always hated that it never seemed weird to anyone else. There's no questioning or thought or analysis, just beards making fucked up jokes. Which brings me back to my first and general point: What's with the apathy? Where's the revolt?

Let's dialogue dude!
marissa@punkymagic.com



KILL THE BUSINESS!

Fuck! ANTiSEEN scorched the earth once again at their twenty-fifth anniversary show! The two-day bash at the Tremont Music Hall in Charlotte, North Carolina brought Confederacy Of Scum fans from all over the world! Italy, Germany, Canada, and Australia were well represented! The crowd came from all four corners of the USA as well! The first night of music was kicked off by NOT LIKELY. This spirited chaos punk band had the younger mohawks creating an enthusiastic pit. The fists were in the air! The punks went off! The Friday night festivities included Tom O'Keefe's new band. Mr. O'Keefe was a member of ANTiSEEN way back when. Mr. O'Keefe's band is called TOM O'KEEFE AND THE SHITBIRDS. The set list includes many excellent cover tunes plus an unreleased JUDAS BULLETHEAD song. JUDAS BULLETHEAD was a Jeff Clayton/Tom O'Keefe side project. Read this set list from TOM O'KEEFES SHIT BIRDS: "Intro Music," "Rip It Out," "Top Of The World," "Evil Rock And Roll," "Making Love," "Connection," "New Boyfriend," "Small Town Schizoid," "Hot Love," "Chinese Rocks," (Ramones/Johnny Thunders) "Bodies," (Sex Pistols) and "Dirty Deeds/Let There Be Rock" (AC/DC).

Next up was Biggy Stardust, vocalist of the DEAD KINGS with his new outfit BIGGY STARDUST. These veteran rockers roared through ten hard rock tunes that were played with conviction. Biggy Stardust was adorned in one of the most flamboyant rock outfits ever witnessed. Yes! Read over this set list: "Call It A Day," "Just Don't Care," "Lip Service," "Don't Say I'm Cute," "Soccer Mom Love," "Take What You Need," "Wretched Lives," "Under Your Radar," "Masculinity," and "S.T.A.R.D.U.S.T."

The next band was a bonifide skull krusher!!!! BEFORE I HANG from Hattiesburg, Mississippi, came to destroy Charlotte!!! Holy fuck! With Chris on vocals, Little John on drums, Joel on bass, and Walt on guitar these fucks tore the place up!! Chris stalked the stage like a caged animal and punched at the floor with ferocious strength! BEFORE I HANG turned the Tremont Music Hall on its fucking ear! Walt played manic fast guitar while Joel and Little John nailed down the foundation. You have to see it to believe it!!! Chris is possessed by rock and roll! He's fucking bristling with dangerous punk rock bile! Here's the set list from the BEFORE I HANG show in Charlotte: "More Fun," "Rock'n'Roll Tragedy," "Please Me," "Nuthin' But Fist," "Put U Out," "Kiss My Southern Ass," "Blow Up The World," "Freon Head," "Dixie Pig," "Up Front," "Targets," and "Get Drunk". No discussion will be tolerated—BEFORE I HANG dominated the first night of the ANTiSEEN twenty-fifth anniversary show!!!

When the lights cracked through the smoke on the second night of this beer-and-blood fest, mighty HAMMERLOCK from Oakland, California unveiled the toughest country-scum music in the United States of

America! Travis and Elizabeth smashed through eleven mean originals including their new scum rock hit "My Baby Loves To Hate." Fucking great! Read the list of HAMMERLOCK anthems: "Billy The Kid," "Hate Radio," "Older & Meaner," "Baby Loves To Hate," "Second Home," "Two Inch Hole," "Devils Gonna Get 'Ya," "Let It Ride," "No Man's Land," "Lonesome, Ornery & Mean," "Tennessee Whiskey," and "Lake Country." Included was an opening salvo with Phil Irvin of RANCID VAT and WHISKEY REBEL fame offering up "I'll Just Sit Here And Drink" (MERLE HAGGARD). Yes!

A small clan of HAMMMERLOCK fans followed the band south to Anderson, South Carolina the following night. Sunday's show at the Pass-n-Time bar was one of the moments in the lifetime of a devoted confederacy of scum fan that will bring a smile to the face forever. Ian and Sarah were the best host and hostess imaginable!!! The Pass-n-Tine bar owner, Larry, the employees, and the patrons were incredibly helpful with the HAMMERLOCK show!!! This is what is known in South Carolina as Southern hospitality!!! HAMMERLOCK played three sets lasting two and a half hours!!! The alcohol flowed!! By the end of the night the crowd was up front singing along to favorite songs!! Thanks go out to Randy and Beth for helping with the crowd and to Ian and Sarah for organizing this amazing evening!!!

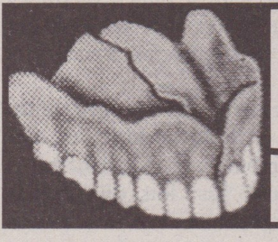
Back to our review of Saturday night in Charlotte. JOE BUCK YOU—a one man band formed by an accomplished member of the band HONKY, pride of Austin, Texas, turned in an entertaining set of dirty blues. It is highly amusing to see one man deliver so much noise.

The Cosmic Commander, from Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, was in attendance to present ANTiSEEN! Twenty-five years on—Mr. Clayton and Mr. Young continue to cut a swathe of destruction across the Southland! Read this inspired set list: "Ruby Get Back To The Hills," "She's Not Part Of The Scene," "Up All Night," "Leeches & Losers," "Spare Change," "Hammerhead," "Wife Beater," "Nothing's Cool," "Fornication," "Kill The Business," "Alive And Unwell," "Ugly American," "Fuck The Kids," "Sabu," "If There's A Hell Below, We're All Gonna Go," (CURTIS MAYFIELD) "Today Your Love – Tomorrow The World," (RAMONES), "Stormtrooper," "I've Aged Twenty Years In Five," "Cactus Jack," "Animals – Eat 'Em!" "I Am Glad," "Jack Starr," "Trapped In Dixie," "You're Gonna Tote An Ass Whooping," "Hippy Punk," "Death Train," "Queen City Stomp," "Destructo Rock," and "Fuck All You All!" The crowd went fucking crazy!! To this fan's knowledge ANTiSEEN has never played this insane number of songs in one set during the last twenty-five years! This show was absolutely brilliant! Mr. Clayton demonstrated once again that he is the undisputed heavyweight champion of the rock 'n' roll world! Mr. Young played guitar as if his very life depended on it! This was a full-fledged celebration of twenty-five years of triumphant scum rock. Here's to the next twenty-five years!!!!

***

Fuck yes! Dirty Punk Records from France has done it again! This month you get TROTSKIDS *La Complete Volume 2*. This top quality skinhead/punk music comes inside beautiful packaging that includes all the lyrics in their native tongue. The LP contains songs from the following: *Maxi* (Chaos Productions), *Chaos En France Volume 2* on Chaos Productions, *A Mort… A Fond* on Terminal Records, *Underground Volume 1* on Squale Records and *4 Fois En 10 Minutes* on Combat Rock Records. This is a fucking great record! This new TROTSKIDS *La Complete Volume 2* is just a notch below *La Complete Volume 1* released by Dirty Punk Records earlier this year! For your copy contact Dirty Punk Records at BP 10302, 59666 Villeneuve D'Ascq Cedex, France. www.dirtypunk.fr

Until next month—see you fucks at the bar!



NOTHING EVER LASTS

CISSIE

If you talk to anyone that's had a record label for over the last ten years or so, they will tell you that people don't buy records like they used to. I mean, it makes sense that independent records sold more in the '90s because that was the peak of involvement in the punk scene, even though the music was not as good. Suckiness aside, the record industry has seen a recent rise in the demand of their releases on vinyl, but independent punk records are selling less than ever. Does this mean that people only like to buy shitty music on vinyl or does it mean that punk is dying or have punks stopped buying vinyl in favor of MP3s? I'll tell ya what I think—punks have become fetishists and are only interested in records that exist in numbers of 300 or less, quality or not. In some ways, it's less consumer-driven since collectors no longer feel the need to be completists, although they still feel the need to own anything rare, which makes this shit a meaningless hobby. Beyond that, I think the younger folks don't have the same attachment to the aesthetic value of vinyl and simply download everything. I'm not anti-download, but I will be really sad if punk labels start folding because people have lost interest in records. If things don't change soon, I'll bet a lot more folks will go the way of Sound Idea and just say "fuck it."

***

For those keeping score, this is Justin's last issue as content coordinator, so kudos to him for his year of *MRR* coordination. Hopefully we will still be lucky enough to have his presence grace our reviews section and our graphics department. It's especially sad for me because Justin and I started coordinating at the same time, and he's been a constant fixture since I've been here. At any rate, starting next month Layla will be the new content coordinator and Diane will move here from Brooklyn to take care of the distro. As always, the change at *MRR* is constant.

***

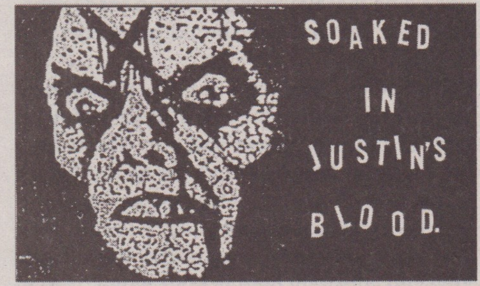
Speaking of change, this month we decided to cut down the number of pages in *MRR*. We came to this decision for multiple reasons. Over the past couple years the classifieds and letters sections have shrunk substantially. This means we have been working harder to fill the pages with dynamic content, but it's difficult to pack 50-plus pages with interesting interviews and the like (and feel free to send us some scene reports, folks. Does punk still exist in lots of little pockets across the globe? Help us out). I think having less pages will help make the content more focused and better. In general, we won't be cutting down on any of the prime sections, but the text size might be slightly smaller. We *are* getting rid of the classifieds section, which is probably long overdue. Lately we've had a hard time filling even half of page with the classifieds that we receive every month. By the way, if you have an interesting story that resulted from or relates to the *MRR* classifieds, then email it to us at mrr@maximumrocknroll.com. We want to feature some sort of memorial for the classifieds in an upcoming issue and we're looking for contributions. It can be something as simple as scoring some awesome records or meeting new friends to weird letters received from prospective pen pals, getting hooked up with free cable, your adventures with Nuclear Skull, whatever.

***

The other reason for cutting down the page count is financial, as it will save us a bit of money on each issue. We are struggling to pay all of our bills every month due to rising postage, rising rents, etc. We have plans to get out of this predicament. We have been successfully working to better our distribution, but we also plan to get involved in more LP projects to help subsidize our income, have benefit shows, build a better website to generate more interest in the magazine with the internet generation, etc. We're even considering the possibility of having the cover printed on cardstock. At any rate, we don't plan on being broke for long, but at the moment things are slightly grim. About a year ago we became involved with a not-for-profit organization called Indy Arts. We can receive grants and donations through Indy Arts to help us make ends meet. If you're interested in helping *MRR* financially please get in touch with us at mrr@maximumrocknroll.com and we'll tell ya what to do. If you want to send a donation, you should write a check payable to Indy Arts (write Maximum Rocknroll in the "for" line) to this address: Indy Arts, PMB 821, 601 Van Ness St, Ste E, San Francisco, CA 94012. Or if you prefer to send e-money, write us for the link. We will be eternally grateful and, hell, if ya donate enough we'll even send a goodies package of some sort.

***

Even though the page count was cut this month, we decided to add What's the Scoop? back into our monthly features. Dan Goetz was determined to foist it upon us, and we couldn't bring ourselves to say "no." Actually we planned on bringing it back for issue #300, but I took a tape recorder a show around that time and was too shy to ask anyone a question. I think Layla questioned some folks at the Fy Fan show at Thrillhouse, but didn't get enough interesting answers. In short, we sucked and Dan G. came to our rescue to bring this dormant feature back to life. Thanks Dan!



I Don't Care If I'm A Loser In A Game I Never Played

This is my final column as a coordinator of *Maximum Rocknroll*. Starting next month, this column will be strictly about music. What a novel idea, right? If you've been keeping up (yeah right, do people actually read my column? Big up to my fanz!), you most likely already knew that. It'd be dishonest if I said I wasn't pretty excited. I'm ready to move on to whatever it is that the next part of my life will bring. I'm tired. Working here and working full time at another job has taken a massive toll on me, mentally and physically. I knew right away that it was an impossibility to do both but I tried anyway. Can't fault for that. As my dad said in his high-school yearbook entry, "Try as hard as you can and no man can ask for more." I've always lived my life my way by my rules, respectfully of course, even when something inside *me* expressed better judgment. Live and learn. It's the only way.

I moved out of the Maxipad three weeks ago and I already miss the bouts of the Judas Priest blasting from Scott's room going toe to toe with Roehrs' all-day *Victim In Pain* sessions. I'm sure in a month I'll even miss sitting in that captain's chair intently trying to figure out which one of Quark's quarks I'm currently contending with to fix some problem in a layout, while Hubbs rocks the newest Down By Law record or the *Violent World: Tribute to the Misfits* at 3am too. Instead, I'll be twenty blocks away listening to something equally horrid, like my "best of Alkaline Trio" mixtape, in my room while trying to get Lucy to stop eating out of the trash. To everyone that has wished me luck, given advice, said "What the fuck are you doing?" and every Shitworker, contributor or advertiser that I encountered in the last fourteen months, thank you. For everything!

***

Similar sentiment appears other places in this issue but I really feel the need to voice my personal sorrow regarding the unfortunate end of Sound Idea/Burrito Records. I only ordered from Bob a couple times since my initial awakening towards the wonderful world that is mailorder and, in fact, Bob refunded my money for the first order cause I didn't order the minimum of $10 worth of merchandise (if I had read the whole ad, I'd have known better), and I never made it to the store—I haven't been to Florida since I was ten—but Sound Idea was one of the most honest, dedicated, affordable and hardworking distribution spots in the world that we know as punk. Not that there aren't many other distros out there that also embody these same qualities… It also shows a great deal of respect on Bob's part for what it is that we all love by bowing out gracefully before having to compromise any of his ethics. Mr. Suren, I curtsey to you for all you've done for the punxes of the world, and wish you nothing but the best of luck. Your efforts will be sorely missed in these pages and our record collections.

***

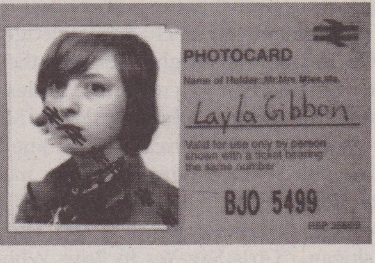
By the time this issue hits news stands the world over, the U. S. of motherfuckin' A will have elected one of two incompetent menaces that are left in the race as the mouthpiece of it's biggest assholes. It's like a big fucking joke that they forget to let us in on. I'm not gonna pretend that I understand politics beyond knowing right from wrong, never mind the quantum physics that is presidential politics and "the electoral college," but either way, we've already screwed the pooch. This country cannot be fixed beyond a nuclear winter and just plain old starting over. Besides, I'm too busy dealing with the identity issues of figuring out if I'm a "Joe The Plumber" or a "Joe Six Pack."

***

And with that, I bid *adieu.* This month's playlist: Dillinger Four *Civil War*, Latin Dogs 7", Olho Seco/Brigada Do Odio split LP, Leuzemia LP, Deathreat *Consider It War* LP, Rain 12", Insomnio's second LP, Diplo's "Dutty Six Pack"—a mind-blowing mash-up of Black Flag and Cutty Ranks, and I finally like the Rites Of Spring LP.

For now I can still be reached at justin@maximumrocknroll.com, and these things and some other things eventually find their way to deadstareforlife.blogspot.com. Thanks for listening.

"My life my choice, my life my choice, my life my choice, my life my choice, my life my choice, my life my choice, my life my choice, my life my choice…"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The worst feeling is walking along somewhere and being struck by the fact that I have been working customer service style jobs since 2002. The thought of all those "Can I Help Yous?" "Let Me Know If You Have Any Questions" piling on top of each other endlessly is enough to crush a girl. SHOP WORKERS OF THE WORLD UNITE. In the face of the total collapse of the "Western" service-based economy! What can customers buy? Is customer service a skill? What's a customer to do in a time like this, when the people who were re-re-remortgaging their houses to buy mahogany and marble bedroom sets are now living in parking lot communities? I just wanna have something to do. I don't wanna be buried in a pet cemetary...

Things that have been on my mind this month:

1. What if you are watching a band cover a song badly, on a shitty video tape, while there are a million other things you could be doing, and all you can think of is the fact that every single kid in the front row of the show is holding a camera, looking through the lens of a camera, or about to take a photograph. There is a crowd surfer stuck on top of the crowd; he can't get down or move anywhere somehow so he's just flailing around in a corduroy jacket with fake sheepskin lining, held up by sweaty children of the middle classes who are only able to experience things completely if they are also able to document them simultaneously. Like my mum always says, it's not real unless it's been on TV or captured on your video camera or whatever.

2. The way that ideas and movements are reduced to an aesthetic, a style, a haircut, or outfit. I don't know what to say except design blogs, girls with Marianne Faithful haircuts, the craft revolution, and last but definitely not least, Back to the Land: the Urban Outfitters version. Forget wimmin's lib, knit yr boyfriend a scarf and cook him up some stew for the cold months—and while you're at it take a few photos of yourself lookin' winsome for your fashion blog. Case in point: "Girls Say Yes to Boys Who Say No." There's this photo of the Baez sisters, mid-'60s, sitting in a bohemian living room under the above slogan, in support of draft resistance. The first time I saw it I was horrified at the implication, and I still can't figure it out. The more I think about it, the more the meaning shifts. Their serene yet secure expressions made me think that this was probably the first era that it was OK for women to publicly acknowledge that it's OK to enjoy sex. Right? But then they are offering themselves as a reward to dudes who resisted the draft. Ladyprize. Yeah. Maybe you know about this already, but some hypster girls in Williamsburg, Brooklyn made a poster referring to the aforementioned with themselves looking whimsical and fey with the slogan, "Girls Say Yes to Boys Who Say Obama." Jeez. I got nothin' to say about that at all.

3. Reading an interview with a band that started out. because the roadie of another band used to sing one song on stage with them each night, so they told him he should have his own band... and he did! But this interview is ten years after the fact, and he of course states the obvious—hardcore died in '92 when he lost interest and the best thing that's happened to hardcore since then was the Gorilla Biscuits reunion. To be honest with you, I have never really "gotten" Gorilla Biscuits, but I wonder about that song "Cats and Dogs" sometimes. I mean, if the best thing that's happened to hardcore since '92 was the GB reunion, then how does it feel singing that song as a man in your 40s? Also, the best thing that happened to hardcore since '92? GB reunion? Really? What about the internet? Amazingcore? Ebay Gold? The Reagan-band revival followed by the Crossover™ revival? Also teenage thrash fans armed with Vile and Chronic Sick MP3s? Vegan straight edge longsleeves that reappropriated corporate logos? Krshna beads? Perzines? Myspace Crust? Apathy? Hardline? ENDTIMES.

4. In further news on the ongoing investigation into the true mutant sound, The Power of the Spoken Word *Language of a Dying Breed* LP fits the bill nicely this month. Hailing from Nebraska in thee early-to-mid-'80s, the band sounded like Flipper trying to cover Rudimentary Peni—how could I not be totally consumed by this? And you too? Total claustrophobic, fucked-up hardcore that changes shape as you listen to it, not like anything else. It's been compared to Spike in Vain, the Cleveland band, which I can see only in that it comes from a similarly skewed perspective, but I am not so sure in terms of the sound. I know that fairly recently there were still stock copies of that Spike in Vain record if you wanna do your own compare and contrast... And for true empirical comparison, Goodbadmusic.com has a downloadable version of the *Language of a Dying Breed* LP if you wanna check it out. Also been psyched on a similar era band, New England mutants The Scam. I played the 7" on *MRR* radio a few weeks back, and have heard word that there's an unreleased LP about to be reissued. Am actually not too clear about what the deal is with this band; the music is hardcore and it's got that thing that Void has where in lesser hands it would merely be inept metal, but somehow it's the transcendent sound of true malcontents. It's hardcore, exactly how I like it. You can't go wrong with the Hieronymus Bosch-styled art on the 7" cover, too...

5. Turboslut may be the absolute worst band name of the year, and in places it gets a little Heavens to Betsy cutesy rage rock; riot grrrl vs foxcore style if you want the rock journo music tags. *But* when they are on it, they have this total Nog Watt mutant-girl sound that'll make you wanna start your own Manson family. All lady-made tuff, gnarled-up thrash tapes can be gotten here: turboslutsavedmylife@gmail.com

6. Got sent the Sisters LP and have been listening to it; makes me think of dank Northwestern times, *Fake Train* and Kotton Krowns. It's definitely a good sound for paranoid times and insular winters. Parts Unknown.

7. The issue after this one will be the Punx in Film issue. What's your favorite punk movie? Favorite punk moment in a movie? I watched part of the Mike Leigh movie *Meantime* featuring a very young Tim Roth as a reserved slow younger brother, a similarly very young Gary Oldham as a skinhead, and Phil Daniels (Jimmy from *Quadrophenia!*) as a grotty casual. I had to translate most of what was said as my viewing partner was unable to understand the cockney accents prevalent throughout. Seeing the language and landscapes of my youth on the big screen is always compelling—the pebble-dashed council estates, the dark pubs and slimy parkas. How ugly '70s and '80s Britain was; Thatcher's doom, crushing brains and spirits. The way in which one woman managed to get the working class to hate itself; thusly noses were cut off to spite faces. The last time I went back to London, it was such a different place—you know, organic cafes everywhere. What was particularly mind-blowin' were the former squats converted into condos in Hackney. Victoria Park, I hardly knew ye! I was trying to picture kids breakdancing at youth club discos in council estates, reggae soundsystems, and playing tag, jumping roof to roof on parked cars—and instead got fashion stylists living in former council flats, glamorizing a past they never inhabited.

It's funny that when I was a kid I could never get into the Clash, yet as soon as I left London and moved to America I got this instant and obsessive nostalgia for them. Their music suddenly came to embody my youth, and my idea of London was colored so totally by their sound. I saw this movie Don Letts made, with The Slits, where Ari Upp runs round Picadilly Circus taking her clothes off in inappropriate places, ending up at an all-nighter reggae party, probably somewhere in South London. I don't know. London doesn't exist anymore—it's just an idea, a memory, a council estate upbringing with a resourceful free-jazz-loving single mum.

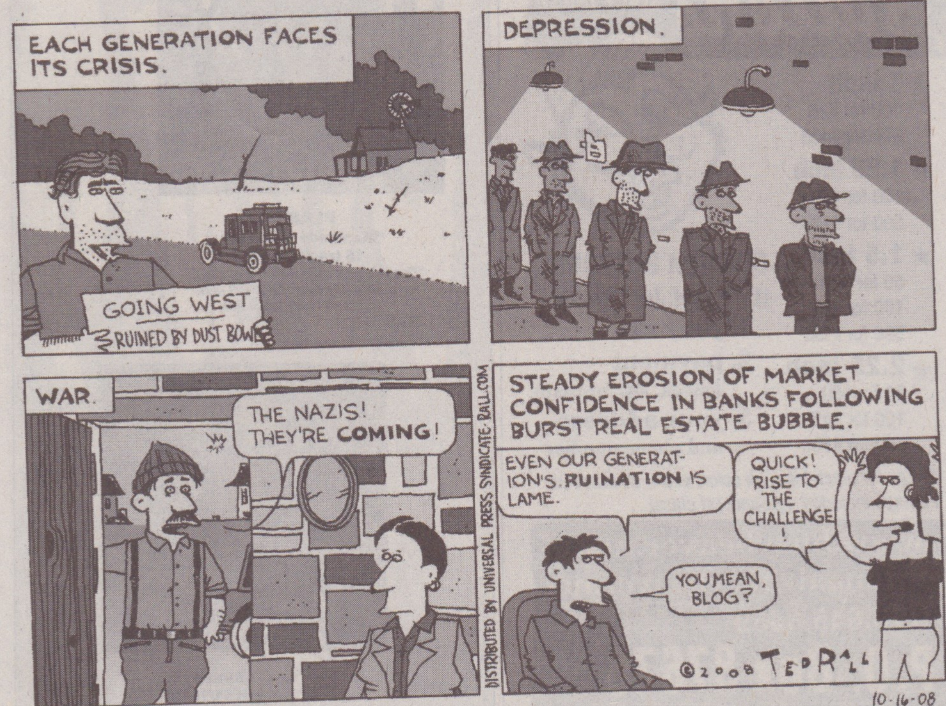
8. For some reason *Vice* magazine got a hold of my zine and reviewed it. I got a bunch of random emails from confused kids and pushy oblivious PR people. I didn't respond to any of them. Chris asked me why I print my email address in here even though I never write anyone back, and I don't know the answer to that question. I do write back sometimes! I also have none of my zines left, but Wendy at oogaboogastore.com does. She also has a zine that Raymond Pettibon made especially for her that you should get whilst you can.

9. It's been said before but yeah, we can take tax-deductible donations! If you are sitting on piles of unwanted cash and you wanna help us continue onwards and upwards, get in touch. (Preserving, maintaining, and continuing the record collection! Pesky printing bills! The continual publishing of the very magazine you currently hold in your hands.) Email mrr@maximumrocknroll.com for more info.

10. Our new distro coordinator Diane is moving out here next month, technically next week, which'll be awesome, and will also be the first time in *MRR* history that every coordinator position is held by a woman, with Cissie and myself being thee content coordinators now.

I have not read *Flowers in the Attic* or *Helter Skelter* or seen any of the *Gremlins* or *Back to the Future* movies.

whatwewantsisfree.blogspot.com is where these columns reside on the web. I am here: layla@maximumrocknroll.com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THE NAZIS! THEY'RE COMING!
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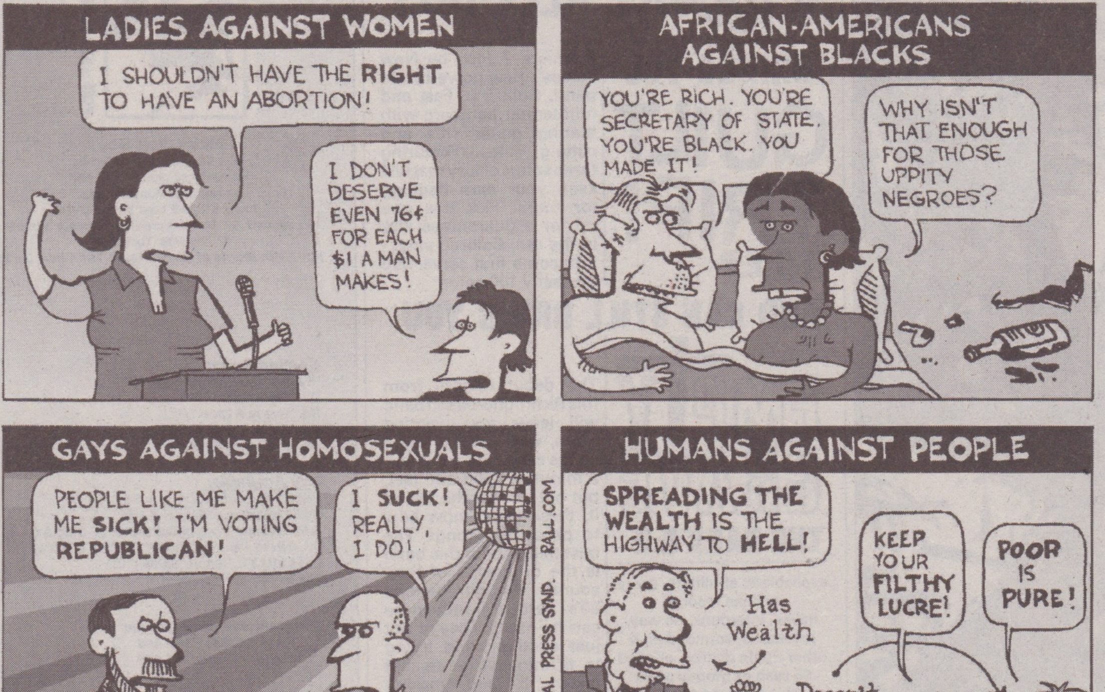
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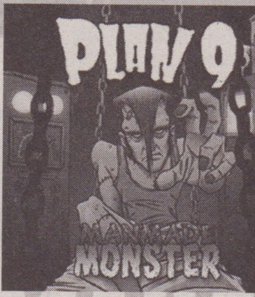

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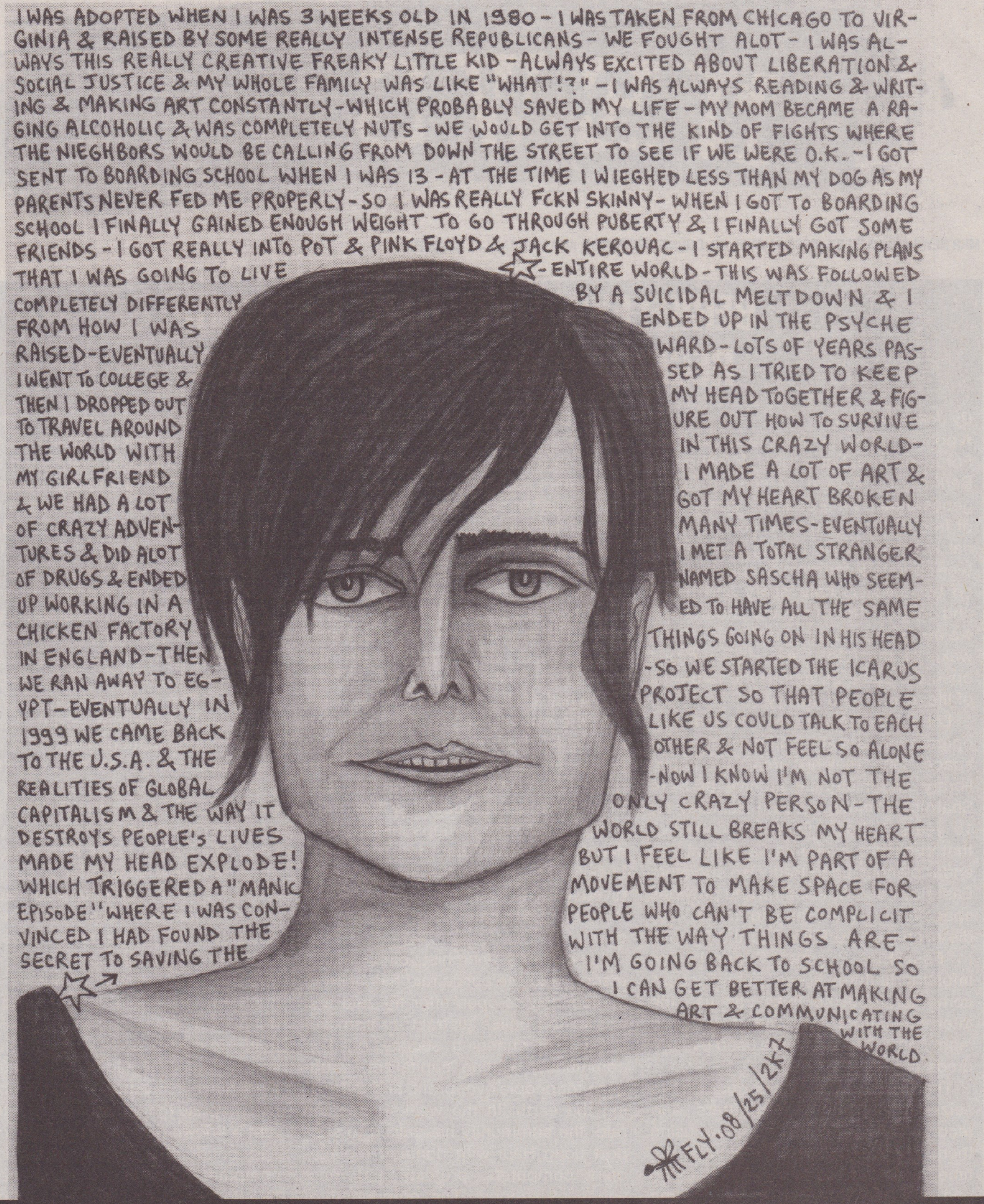

I WAS ADOPTED WHEN I WAS 3 WEEKS OLD IN 1980 - I WAS TAKEN FROM CHICAGO TO VIRGINIA & RAISED BY SOME REALLY INTENSE REPUBLICANS - WE FOUGHT ALOT - I WAS ALWAYS THIS REALLY CREATIVE FREAKY LITTLE KID - ALWAYS EXCITED ABOUT LIBERATION & SOCIAL JUSTICE & MY WHOLE FAMILY WAS LIKE "WHAT!?" - I WAS ALWAYS READING & WRITING & MAKING ART CONSTANTLY - WHICH PROBABLY SAVED MY LIFE - MY MOM BECAME A RAGING ALCOHOLIC & WAS COMPLETELY NUTS - WE WOULD GET INTO THE KIND OF FIGHTS WHERE THE NIEGHBORS WOULD BE CALLING FROM DOWN THE STREET TO SEE IF WE WERE O.K. - I GOT SENT TO BOARDING SCHOOL WHEN I WAS 13 - AT THE TIME I WIEGHED LESS THAN MY DOG AS MY PARENTS NEVER FED ME PROPERLY - SO I WAS REALLY FCKN SKINNY - WHEN I GOT TO BOARDING SCHOOL I FINALLY GAINED ENOUGH WEIGHT TO GO THROUGH PUBERTY & I FINALLY GOT SOME FRIENDS - I GOT REALLY INTO POT & PINK FLOYD & JACK KEROUAC - I STARTED MAKING PLANS THAT I WAS GOING TO LIVE COMPLETELY DIFFERENTLY FROM HOW I WAS RAISED - EVENTUALLY I WENT TO COLLEGE & THEN I DROPPED OUT TO TRAVEL AROUND THE WORLD WITH MY GIRLFRIEND & WE HAD A LOT OF CRAZY ADVENTURES & DID ALOT OF DRUGS & ENDED UP WORKING IN A CHICKEN FACTORY IN ENGLAND - THEN WE RAN AWAY TO EGYPT - EVENTUALLY IN 1999 WE CAME BACK TO THE U.S.A. & THE REALITIES OF GLOBAL CAPITALISM & THE WAY IT DESTROYS PEOPLE'S LIVES MADE MY HEAD EXPLODE! WHICH TRIGGERED A "MANIC EPISODE" WHERE I WAS CONVINCED I HAD FOUND THE SECRET TO SAVING THE ☆ ☆ - ENTIRE WORLD - THIS WAS FOLLOWED BY A SUICIDAL MELTDOWN & I ENDED UP IN THE PSYCHE WARD - LOTS OF YEARS PASSED AS I TRIED TO KEEP MY HEAD TOGETHER & FIGURE OUT HOW TO SURVIVE IN THIS CRAZY WORLD - I MADE A LOT OF ART & GOT MY HEART BROKEN MANY TIMES - EVENTUALLY I MET A TOTAL STRANGER NAMED SASCHA WHO SEEMED TO HAVE ALL THE SAME THINGS GOING ON IN HIS HEAD - SO WE STARTED THE ICARUS PROJECT SO THAT PEOPLE LIKE US COULD TALK TO EACH OTHER & NOT FEEL SO ALONE - NOW I KNOW I'M NOT THE ONLY CRAZY PERSON - THE WORLD STILL BREAKS MY HEART BUT I FEEL LIKE I'M PART OF A MOVEMENT TO MAKE SPACE FOR PEOPLE WHO CAN'T BE COMPLICIT WITH THE WAY THINGS ARE - I'M GOING BACK TO SCHOOL SO I CAN GET BETTER AT MAKING ART & COMMUNICATING WITH THE WORLD

Ashley McNamara - 08/25/2K7 - New York City

I drew this portrait when Ashley was briefly in NYC this past summer - she has been living since this past May with her partner in England - I first met Ashley through my kid brother Sascha Scatter when they co-founded The Icarus Project in 2002 - an organization focused on mental health issues in the radical community - you can see what they are up to on their website - www.theicarusproject.net - Ashley is a really incredible visual artist & graphic designer - you can see her stuff on her website - www.ashley-mcnamara.net - she also told me that her biological dad found her in 2K1 & that he is bipolar & his brother is bipolar & they are both crazy & creative!!

to contact Fly email: fly@bway.net (put MRR in the subject so i know its not spam) - fly zines are available through microcosmpublishing.com - & stay tuned for new fly releases coming soon from PM Press!! (www.pmpress.org) - to send snail mail (i love snail mail!!) - send to - Fly PO Box 1318 Cooper Stn NYC NY 10276 US

NEWS

MRR NEWS COMPILED BY JESSE PALMER, DR. DONNIE DRIFTWOOD, AND THE MAGICAL NEWS ELF.

BERKELEY'S LONG HAUL INFOSHOP REGROUPS AFTER POLICE RAIDS

By Jesse D. Palmer

A police raid by the Joint Terrorism Task Force on the Long Haul Infoshop in Berkeley on August 27 was an outrageous attack on a peaceful community of free-thinkers and do-it-yourself radical activists. While having your volunteer-operated community space invaded by police is ugly, scary and brutal and creates a lot of anxiety and trauma, we are bruised but not defeated. In the wake of the raid, Long Haul remains open the same as before the raid—full of life, events and energy.

Long Haul is a non-profit that has operated a radical reading room, event space, zine making area, alternative library and historical archive at 3124 Shattuck Avenue in South Berkeley for 15 years. It hosts Slingshot collective that publishes a zine and a radical calendar planner. Long Haul also sponsors East Bay Food Not Bombs and provides space for activities ranging from a needle exchange, to Pilates to the People, to East Bay Prisoner Support. The Infoshop features a free, public access computer room so folks can use the internet—before the raid it featured eight computers that were used by hundreds of people.

The police raid's official goal was to seize those public computers and records of who might have been using them. No one was at Long Haul at the time of the raid and as of press date, no one has been arrested for any crime related to the raid. University of California police, a county sheriff deputy and a federal agent broke-in with guns drawn after they traced a number of allegedly threatening emails sent to UC Berkeley animal researchers to the DSL Internet connection at Long Haul. The cops never would have gotten such a broad search warrant if the computers had been at a public library, rather than at a radical Infoshop. Long Haul volunteers arrived shortly after the raid began and asked police to see a search warrant. The police refused to allow volunteers inside the building and said they would only provide a copy of the search warrant after the raid. Police broke locks on doors inside the Infoshop and searched files for an hour and a half while a crowd milled outside. Police eventually seized all 14 computers inside—both the ones used for the public access internet room and computers used by Slingshot and East Bay Prisoner Support. They also took most of our music CDs perhaps thinking they might have computer data on them. Luckily, they didn't take the dumpster-dived vinyl record collection, which is the real backbone of Long Haul's music reality.

Long Haul's anarchist, direct action response to the police raid has been to immediately re-open after the raid and not let the police distract us from our mission of changing society, building community, fighting capitalism, struggling for people over profit, and defending the earth. In the weeks since the raid, the community has rallied to support Long Haul with donated replacement computers, protests and messages of support. The outpouring of support since the raid has been humbling—it is no joke to say that there is a radical community that has your back when you need it.

A statement of probable cause submitted by UCPD officer Kasiske to obtain the search warrant lists six allegedly threatening email messages sent from a computer connected to the Long Haul's DSL line to UC researchers in June. The police obtained records from Long Haul's ISP as well as Google tracing emails sent from Gmail accounts accessed through the Long Haul DSL line. The warrant application discusses recent home demonstrations at UC Berkeley and implies that they are linked with two fire-bombings against animal researchers in Santa Cruz on August 2. The application also mentions the Animal Liberation Front. Kasiske told the judge that Long Haul was a radical space: "I know that the Long Haul is a resource and meeting center for radical activists. I know that animal rights activists have held meetings at the Long Haul. The Long Haul's website advertises that they offer a computer room with four computers for 'activist oriented access.'" Given that the purportedly illegal threatening emails were sent from a public computer in June and that the raid was in August—with hundreds of people visiting Long Haul during that time—one might think that trying to find a particular person who sent six emails would be like looking for a needle in a haystack. Was the police's real purpose to find a suspect, or to disrupt a known radical community center and conduct a fishing expedition of computer information from hundreds of people who used Long Haul computers unrelated to any threatening emails? Kasiske's search warrant application sought an extremely broad search: "I know establishments that offer public computer access often have some type of system for patrons to sign in or register to use the computers. A search of the Long Haul's premises could reveal logs or sign-in sheets indicating which patrons used the computers on particular dates. This information would aid in identifying the suspect who sent the threatening email messages using the Long Haul's computers. It is likely that the suspect who sent the threatening email messages used the computers for other purposes as well. A search of the computers at the Long Haul could reveal information the suspect stores on the computers, websites the suspect accessed, or other email accounts the suspect used. This information would aid in identifying the suspect. Due to the complexity of searching computer systems and the need to properly maintain evidence stored on computer systems, a detailed search would need to be conducted off-site by a computer forensics specialist." In response, the judge issued a warrant permitting a search for: "Any written, typed, or electronically stored documents, papers, notebooks, or logs containing names or other identifying information of patrons who used the computers at the Long Haul Infoshop." The warrant also authorized search and seizure of all computers and electronic storage devices. By seizing the public access computers, the FBI got access to hundreds of individual people's personal information that may have been left on the public computers. Even when you hit the "delete" button on a computer, your work is left on hard disk drives. It was sheer luck that the Slingshot collective wasn't right in the middle of making the *2009 Organizer* calendar or an issue of the zine at the time of the raid. If that had been the case, the raid could have set Slingshot collective back weeks. As it was, just a few articles and some un-backed up general documents were lost. It does not appear that the police got a copy of the Slingshot mailing list (for sending out zines) or other sensitive Long Haul information. Most of that information was kept at another location on different computers.

Several dozen lawyers volunteered to help Long Haul respond to the raid, including excellent activist lawyers from the National Lawyers Guild and heavy hitters from the Electronic Frontier Foundation and the American Civil Liberties Union. As anarchist-oriented folks who are skeptical of bourgeois, mainstream legal solutions to problems, the Long Haul crew had a great discussion of the merits of using the court system to defend Long Haul against the police raid. The discussion concluded that while the best anarchist, direct action response is to continue the struggle in the streets and for hearts and minds, bourgeois legal action, along with protests and media action, may be a tool open to Long Haul. Generally, Long Haulers want to do what they can so this kind of raid doesn't happen to any other infoshops in the future. That means Long Haul wants to expose the flimsy grounds for the raid and make the raid as expensive, embarrassing and inconvenient for the police as possible. The real danger may still be on the horizon. Given the on-going police investigation of animal rights activity, the Berkeley radical scene is preparing in case the police make further raids, seek to question local activists, make arrests, or subpoena anyone before a Grand Jury. Independent community spaces like Long Haul gather people together so we can build alternatives to the velveeta culture that is killing the earth. Cops need to keep their hands off! Come and visit Long Haul at 3124 Shattuck Ave, Berkley, (near Ashby BART) 510-540-0751, www.thelonghaul.org.

SALI EILER R.I.P.

By Dr. Donny Driftwood

In the early morning of September 14, Sali Eiler, singer of the Tucson, Arizona-based crust band, Cizaña, was brutally raped and murdered in a ramshackle cabin outside of San Jose del Pacifico, in the southern mountains of the Mexican state of Oaxaca. Sali's death has come as a crushing blow to many punks and activists in the US and Mexico.

Sali, 20, unleashed the righteous gritos. I had the good fortune to play drums in Cizaña with her. She typically held court at Dry River, a DIY anarchist collective space in Tucson, but we had just completed a three-week tour through Mexico in June with our friends in Ataxia (from Tucson, Nogales and Austin). We met so many amazing punks in that time. At each show, the attention was focused on Sali. In a culture where machismo reigns, she inspired a number of wimmin in the crowds to start their own punk bands. At our performance in Guadalajara, Sali even opened up the show with an impressive belly dance routine, fully costumed and entrancing the punks in attendance. We let Sali off in Leon, on the southern end of the tour, to travel back to Oaxaca City, where she had been primarily living for the past year. The outpouring of support since Sali has died from the people we met on that tour has been amazing. She is certainly one who touched an incredible amount of people very deeply.

Sali was also involved in a wide array of activist campaigns. In 2003, going by the forest name, Ratty, she was active with the all-womyn treesit in Unit-6 of the Straw Devil timber sale in her native Oregon. Two years later, Sali was the youngest persyn arrested defending an area known as the Biscuit timber sale—the largest timber sale in US history.

More recently, while in Tucson, Sali was heavily involved in No More Deaths, a group dedicated to helping immigrants crossing the Mexico/US border stay alive by leaving water in the desert and monitoring various known immigrant trails. Sali was primarily a coordinator of supplies for the Mariposa crossing, outside of Nogales, Sonora/Arizona. She devoted her time to organizing food deliveries to a camp on the Mexican side of the border where immigrants are brought after they are caught illegally crossing through the US. Sali was also a contributor to the *Earth First! Journal*, writing about indigenous resistance to illegal logging in the mountains of Oaxaca. At the time of her death, Sali had been living and working in Oaxaca City with the Indigenous Popular Council of Oaxaca-Ricardo Flores Magón (CIPO). CIPO is a community-based organization that stands up for the rights of poor and native communities in Oaxaca. Most recently, Sali had been acting as a witness for people facing repression. Before her death, she had been staying with the family of a witness to the murder of US activist Brad Will in Oaxaca City in 2006. Because of her unyielding commitment to defending the human rights of Oaxacans in danger, Sali recently noticed that she'd begun to be followed around Oaxaca City. It's not confirmed that this had anything to do with her death.

Sali's body was discovered on September 24, 10 days after she died, by a man who was feeding some dogs and smelled something disturbing. She was identified within a day, but the Mexican government did not seem interested in investigating what had happened. Instead, friends of hers in Oaxaca, traveling to various locales and calling other friends on the phone, connected the dots and located her killer.

The killer showed up at a popular squatted community space in Mexico City with stab wounds and bruises (inflicted by Sali during his attack on her). After being questioned by punks at the squat and verifying information with people in San Jose del Pacifico, Sali's friends were convinced they had the murderer. They threw a party on September 26, explicitly to get the psychopath in a certain place at a certain time. The killer showed up, was confronted, admitted to killing Sali and promptly had the living crap beat out of him. Eventually, the beating stopped and the scumbag was handed over to the police.

Those of us who knew Sali well will remember her as an inspiration. While only 20 years old, she had been traveling since she was 15, living exactly the life she wanted to live. She was one of those special people who know what they want and seize it. She was full of energy and passion, obsessively belly dancing at every chance she got, playing her banjo when she found a moment and injecting a sense of light-heartedness into the lives of those around her. At a memorial in Tucson the night many of us found out about her death, I couldn't suppress an image of Sali seeing all of us devastated and mournful, coming up to the circle with a wry grin, saying, "Shiiiat, y'all are some suckaasss. Get up and dance, chikitossss!"

A few days after the news of Sali's death spread among her friends in the US, the body of Kirsten Brydum, a San Francisco-based activist, was found in New Orleans with multiple gunshot wounds in her head. Kirsten was an organizer with the Really Really Free Market in San Francisco. At the time of her death, she was on a speaking tour with a group seeking to link anarchist projects around the US. Many people die every day, but it's so hard to function when these genuinely good people, coming from the same general community of activists, die in so narrow a timeframe. It can be tempting to speculate that the US or Mexican governments were somehow involved in both of these deaths (as some have done), but we need to realize that, broader than a focused government crackdown on specific activists, general violence against wimmin remains a tragically widespread problem. It's so crucial that those of us who perpetuate patriarchy and male dominance actively address those issues—within ourselves and our communities. Too many wimmin have suffered. For the sakes of Sali, Kirsten and wimmin everywhere, this needs to stop. Donny still finds it hard to believe that he'll never see Sali again. He's hoping she's somewhere with lots of space to belly dance.

ANTI-WAR VETS AND SUPPORTERS ARRESTED AND TRAMPLED AT THE FINAL PRESIDENTIAL DEBATES

From an article on indymedia.org

HEMPSTEAD, NY – Ten members of the Iraq Veterans Against the War (IVAW), a group of military veterans who are calling for immediate withdrawal from Iraq, were arrested along with at least five civilians outside the final presidential debate at Hofstra University on October 15. The group had been trying to get answers for their questions from the candidates. "Neither of the candidates has shown real support for service members and veterans," said Jason Lemieux, a former Sergeant in the US Marine Corps who served three tours in Iraq, and member of IVAW.

The veterans and their supporters were met by riot police as well as police on horseback. After a tense standoff for five minutes, police used their horses to attack the crowd, knocking over and trampling several,including Army Sergeant Nick Morgan, who suffered a broken cheekbone.

The questions IVAW wanted to ask were:

-(To Obama): "As President of the United States of America, are you prepared to back up your own words [about the illegality of the Iraq War] and the US Constitution by supporting service members refusing to participate in what you describe as an illegal occupation?"

-(To McCain): "What promises are you willing to make, as a veteran, as a senator, as a presidential candidate, to the veterans of the United States, to prove that you will ensure the V.A. is fully funded, staffed and capable of preventing troops from suffering as they are now?"

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MRR asks YOU:

WHAT'S THE SCOOP?

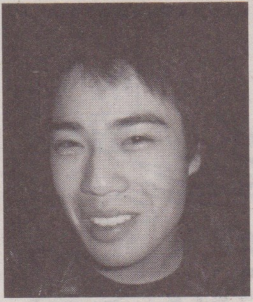
THIS MONTH'S QUESTION: What's the worst thing you did this summer? (asked at the Bay Area Vitamin X shows on September 26th and 27th)

Henry, 20, Millbrae
I was thinking of saying "killed my bandmate," but not going to LA.

Shipwreck, 34, Oakland
Fell into a bear trap.

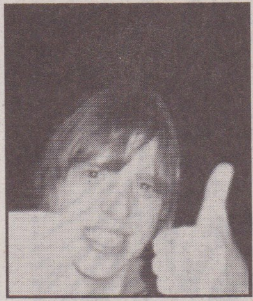
Alex, 23, Oakland
Drank a bottle of whiskey, went to an Al Green concert, and hated on everybody. Got kicked out five times.

Seth, 22, Santa Cruz
Was in a car going 110 in a 20 mile an hour zone and didn't say anything.

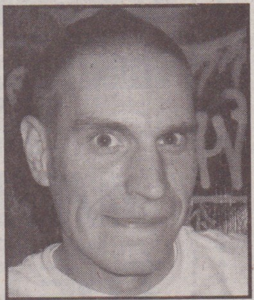


Zack, 20, San Francisco
Got drunk and fell off the N Judah.

Shawn, 18, Pleasanton
Took a magical thighbone from a reservation.

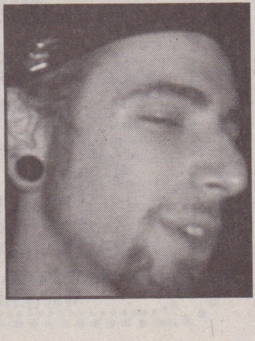


Jess, 22, Woodland
Stayed somewhere for a boy.



Marco, 35, Amsterdam
I was working for a moving company, and the company was a total mess. The van was falling apart, and on top of everything, I managed to fill it with 95 instead of diesel, and it fucking blew up the van completely.

Kaiti, 22, San Francisco
After drinking a pint of whiskey in under five minutes, I don't remember much, but I do know that I waited in line for the bathroom, and once I got in the bathroom, I decided I'd rather piss against the wall, and pissed all over my roommate's sweater.



Brandon, 19, Pleasanton
Fell off a bridge.

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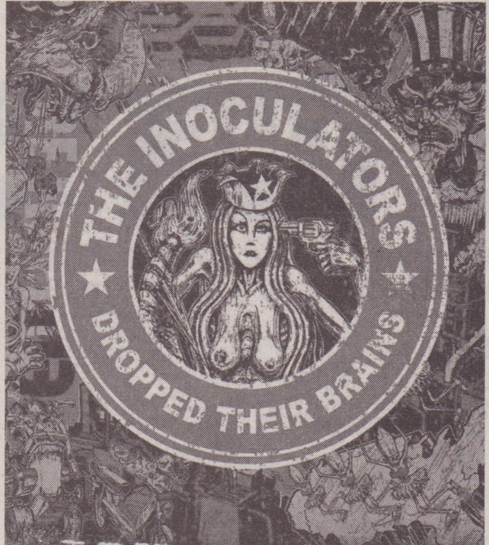
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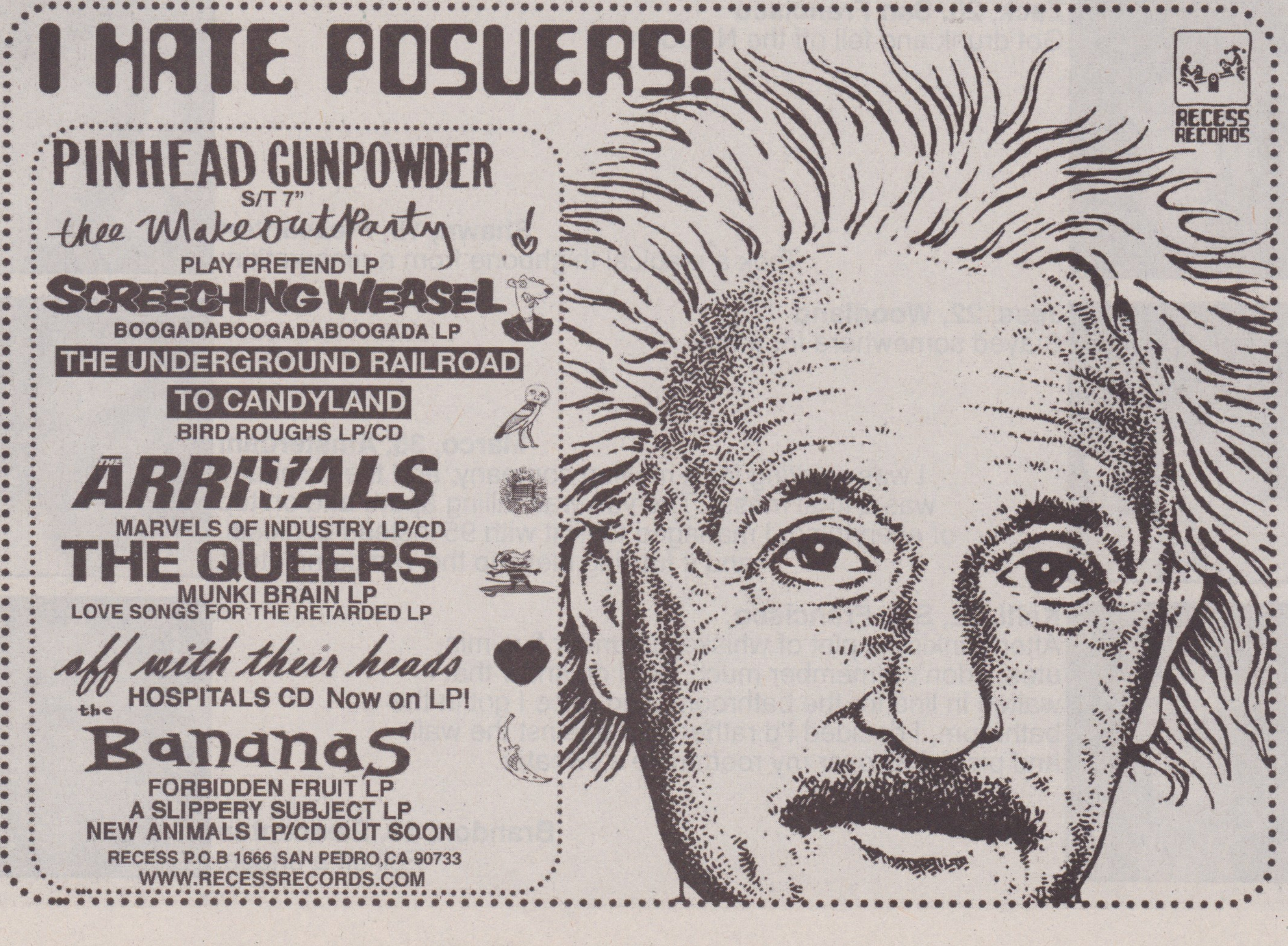
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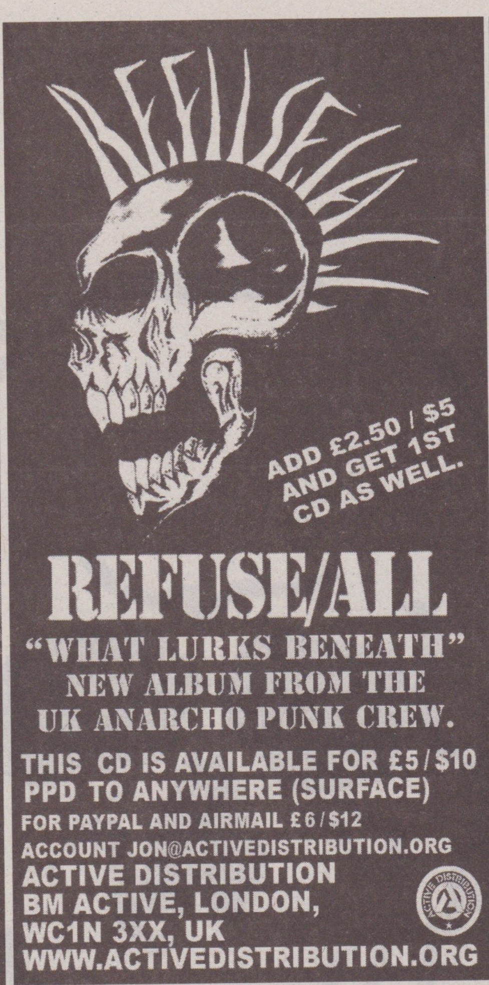

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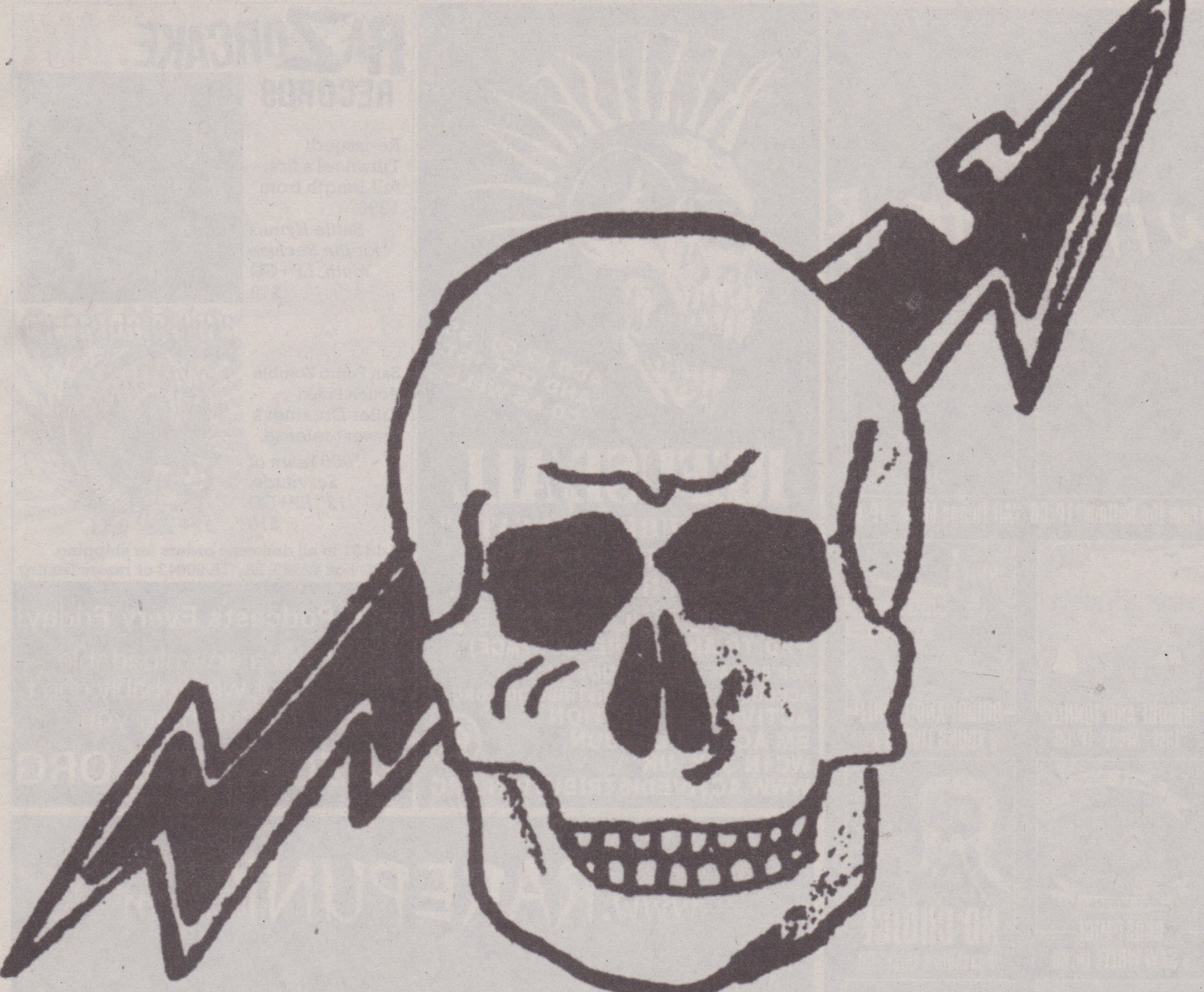


HOMOSTUPIDS

INTERVIEW

In the few years the Homostupids have been around, they've grabbed the harrowing task of deconstructing rock 'n' roll by the balls, diving head first into a tiff with our venerated verse/chorus/verse conservatism, asserting themselves as perhaps the best purveyors of an entirely counterintuitive brand of aggressive music that they haven't even gotten their heads around yet—in the process paving their way to leaving a pretty significant stain on underground punk of the '00s. This interview was conducted at Steve's marvelous summer home after a night of burgers and bowling in the mistake by the lake. Tape recorder in one hand and mixed drink in the other, this is what became of our discussion of Cleveland's finest. Now go out and buy all their fuckin' records. Intro and interview by Brandon Gaffney.

MRR: So, the Homostupids. A lot of people like you guys, despite your always insisting that you're a real shitty act. Any thoughts? Are we a bunch of retards?
Steve: I think you are a retard. How do you like that? Our band is great. Of course a lot of people like our band, our band is very good. All of our records are better than most other bands' records.

MRR: Last time I was in Cleveland you told me that your band's forte is the dialectic of simplicity and complexity, that they're one and the same. Fingers connected to the same palm—you know, all that LSD bullshit. You think it's people's ability to paint their own understanding of such simple, caveman music?

OUR BAND IS GREAT

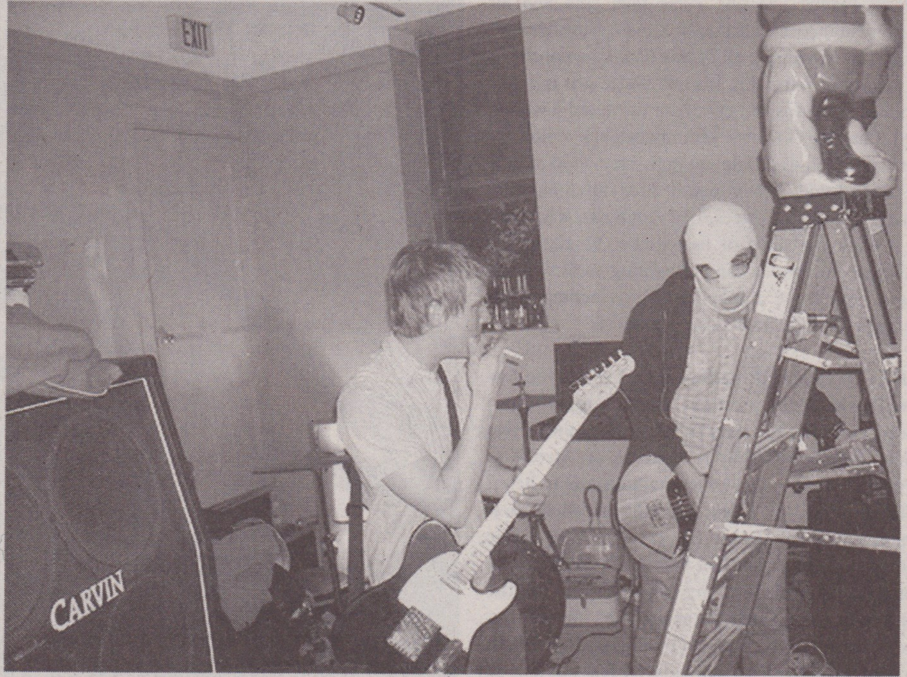
Steve: Hang on there, I was supposed to call our guitar player Josh when we started the interview. Hang on a sec and I'll put him on speakerphone so we can all talk. [*speaking into phone*] Hi, Josh?
Josh: Lemme call you back.
Steve: Alright, forget that for now. What were you asking? Something about LSD, right? Stay away from the stuff. Bad for your body. How does the song go? "Don't do drugs, be a hero not a zero, drugs are no good, get 'em out the neighborhood." Is that what you're talking about? 'Cause that other shit you said doesn't make any sense.

MRR: What I meant is that most punk, hardcore, whatever, is very one-dimensional. Yours is very ambiguous. Difficult to pigeonhole. It's simple but at the same time complex. Your thoughts?
Steve: I like that you say that. It's nice to hear or read what people have to say about our music and approach to making the music. They make us seem more competent and interesting than we really are. As a bass player I'm very limited to what I can do. I'm not very good at it, so that makes it easier for me. The idea for the band, before we even had our first practice, was very simple: primitive style song writing— bang/pound/bang/pound/bang/pound/bash/shit/end. Blown out and ridiculous, but still contained and very direct and to the point as soon as possible. So you do that, and if you want to play the song ever again there has to be some kind of a hook in there or a groove. A lot of our songs don't have a chorus, maybe just one verse then solo and an instrumental part, and then it's over. But there's a hook. I'm explaining all of this like it's a contrived art project or some shit. It's not. We're just lucky to be able to pull this shit out of our asses and it works. And it happens to work with my original vision for the band. Josh and Dale are both very good at guitar and drums. They could play anything...the Kinks, Guided by Voices, Led *Zeppleski*, whatever. So I think the three of us together give you the sound of our sweet band. Anything they write is gonna have to be checked with my incompetence and lack of skill. Does this make sense?

MRR: Of course it makes sense. I think the few people who really nerd out, to punk music especially, and take the time to focus ideas and write about the sounds they're hearing are prone to hyperbole and have active imaginations to begin with. In reality it's just farting out music that smells how it smells. I notice you don't have lyric sheets and know that you personally prefer to be ignorant of what's being whined out. So the songs you write/sing—what are they about?
Steve: Umm...Josh's lyrics, I think, tend to be about girls' clothes, food, and animals. He has two kids so I think he's written a few songs for them. Our song "At the Zoo" was for his daughter. Mine are sometimes about food or animals. Uh...sometimes Mexicans. But mostly about either girls doing drugs or beating up a girl because she's always doing drugs, or girls going to jail or your girlfriend having you put in jail because she's on drugs... Uhhh, a girl who is camping and taking control of the whole camping experience by, uh, you know, setting up the tent and finding the wood for the campfire then building the campfire then making the food. Like, you wake up the next day and she's organizing a hike for everybody and is fishing and catching fish and shit. All that shit. *Cat Music*, our new record, has a lyric sheet and *The Edge* EP has one too. Well, *Edge* has the lyrics typed out phonetically but *Cat Music* has the lyrics enclosed. You've heard our records, what did you pretend we were singing about? [*walking into the kitchen*] Do you want a drink or something, Brandon? We've got juice and water...not much else.

MRR: I'll have a Sam Adams, thanks...I just assumed the lyrics were about the nuances of grocery shopping and pissing your pants on the school bus, but it looks like I wasn't far off. Most of your songs are about women, huh? Are the Homostupids swimmin' in wimmins?
Steve: Well, not women...girls. Girls who take drugs mostly and how their boyfriends deal with them as a result of them being fucked up on drugs all the time....No Sam Adams. There's orange juice and...there's vodka too. You want a juice and vodka?

MRR: I'm not keen on vodka but it'll grease the interview pretty well, so why not... Some people may not be up on *DA/DM* and *Distort* and other zines in which you've extrapolated on the origins of the band, so sorry if this seems redundant but could you just provide a rough outline of how the group got started?
Steve: For quite a while I had an idea for a band. Very simple, primitive song structure and high energy. This just seemed like it'd be the most fun band to be in, right? So I'd been listening to a lot of The Mummies and Dwarves' *Blood Guts and Pussy* and *Toolin'* records, also Grabbies' *I Wanna Be Blind* EP and Supercharger and shit like this. I'm looking around town, asking around, picking my brain wondering who'd be into doing this. And guess what? Nobody is interested, at least nobody I wanted to work with, right? A friend of mine named Jae hipped me to Dale and Josh. I didn't know Dale at all, but Jae says he's a great drummer and not in any bands right now. Josh, I knew a little but barely. Great fucking guitar player. Just ridiculous. He plays with his fists. I made a cold call to Dale and he was into trying it out. He didn't have anything going on, right? So why not. Jae and I stopped by Josh's place one afternoon and I ran the idea past him. He asked, "What do you wanna call the band?" and I said, "Homostupids." He started laughing a little and said that he'd for sure be down to try it out. We didn't know who was gonna play bass and I had just acquired one. So I brought it to the first practice. We wrote "Flies Die" right on the spot and Josh started singing with it. That was it! First practice we wrote, I think, two songs, "Sixths" and "Flies Die." The first few gigs we did, we'd start with a version of "Flies Die" with Josh singing, then we'd do "Sixths," and then we'd do "Flying Dying," which was "Flies Die" with me singing. After we wrote some other tunes, we dropped "Flying Dying," 'cause "Flies Die" is much better. When I listen to our songs now, I don't think we sound anything like those bands I mentioned as core influences before, but the spirit is there a little maybe.



MRR: I remember reading an interview from maybe two years back where you said the reaction to you guys in Cleveland—at least by locals—was shitty and lacking. That wasn't even the very beginning, right? How were those first few shows? How are they different from now—in the reaction and the playing and the cash money bonez? Because your stint at Horriblefest this year was off the fucking wall.

Steve: *[telephone rings]* Hang on, I think that's Josh calling back.

Josh: [*on speakerphone*] Hello?

Steve: Hey, Josh.

Josh: Why'd you call before?

Steve: You said you wanted me to call you when that kid got here.

Josh: Oh, hi. Am I on speakerphone or something?

Steve: Yeah

Josh: HELLO!

Steve: He was just asking if…

Josh: Wait, hang on a second. [*Yells in the background*] Get away from there!

Steve: What's going on over there?

Josh: I gotta call you back.

Steve: Alright, what were you asking—about our gigs in Cleveland or something? Here. Smell my left hand. What the fuck is that smell?

MRR: [*Laughing*] I'm not smelling your fucking hand. I was starting to think you were the designated PR guy of Homostupids Inc or something. You should invite him over to drink with us.

Steve: Josh isn't fuckin' coming over here. I'll call Dale, but he won't come over either. Fucking douchebags Yeah, we're not a very consistent live act. We can write out a set and practice it five times, then when we get to the gig it just sounds like a cyclone or something. Can't tell what the fuck is going on. Other times we're dead on—total pros. The greatest live act in the county! You've seen us in concert before, what's your take?

MRR: My take? I think I may hunt down a soundboard recording of your set that night in Buffalo, last October maybe? Pain in the Big Neck—really cogent and focused. Everyone expected some falling-over-drunk-who-cares-cabaret-slapstick-bumfuck type deal. Really unexpected—you remember? Well, I'd like to bootleg that shit and maybe send you some after driving to another state, right? [*laughing*]

Steve: Yeah, you can try to hunt down a soundboard tape if you want. But those fucking things never sound like you want them to. It'll be kick drum and vocals or some bullshit. But our records are really where it's at for this band. Really, if there's one thing I want to accomplish with this interview it's that more people go out and buy our records. Come to the gigs of course, but buy the records. I've found it works best if you buy two or three of each one.

MRR: When I saw you at Horriblefest this year, it was a pretty violent set. Bar stools flying through the air and all that jazz. You guys aren't the typical Clevo hardcore band in the slightest, but still retain the violent antics in the live setting. You don't mind that people may not experience this aspect of the band by buying the records instead of seeing you live?

Steve: We're a great live band. Better than most other bands playing now for sure, and I think we put on a great show whether we're sucking or not. We blow every band we play with off the stage. Fuck 'em. So of course people should come to the gigs. I don't think there's any violence going on. If we're jumping around or something it's 'cause we're probably horny or something. We're more horny than violent.

MRR: Well, when you put the bass down mid-song and speared some mutants in front of me, it looked more violent than, uh, horny.

Steve: Oh, yeah. I was all jacked up that night. All hopped up on goofballs. Sorry about that. I do like the idea of stopping a song halfway through though. The first year or so we were playing, we'd fuck up a song terribly, stop in the middle, yell at each other, then play it again from the top. It was a lot of fun doing that. I think people thought we were doing it on purpose or something. We were just fucking up and then starting over.

MRR: You have any thoughts on what makes a good Homostupids set and what makes a sucky one? What's the difference?

Steve: I told you before, I think all our gigs are good. If it's sucky that's 'cause you say it is, not me. What makes a sucky one for you?

MRR: I've never seen a sucky Homostupids set. But you refer to some gigs as being sucky. Like when you say, "We put on a great show whether we're sucking or not." Even if you suck at the playing, it's a good gig, is that what you're saying?

Steve: Don't twist my fucking words around.

MRR: [*Laughing*] It's a direct quote! Are you always so moody?

Steve: You interview fucks are making a mockery of my words, man. Moody? Yes.

Let me ask you about your records now. How do you feel about the response to them, in general?

Steve: I guess I just feel great. I'm not sure what the response is. My response is that we are my favorite band.

MRR: Most of their reviews seem to be "drug-fucked" or "pigfucked" or "noisy cavemen fucking in a cave" type shit. Do you agree? Is that what you're going for?

Steve: I don't know why there are so many swear words like that in reviews. I don't think I remember swear words like that in reviews I've seen. but if they want to swear like that, y'know, use the F-word and all that, that's fine. I guess what's most important is that people continue buying the records. Don't you think that's important? I mean, you have a band and you made a record, right?

MRR: Yeah.

Steve: It'd be cool to sell a bunch, right? Sell 'em all. A common misconception about our band is that, "Aww, they're all drunk and wanna look like they don't give a fuck...aww…suck my pussy…aww...so fucked up and shitty and wanting to be, aww, shitty." That's not what's going on with our very great band. We think we're great and we write great tunes and want to sell tons of records. If we play a show and roll around unplugging each others' shit, that's okay 'cause we're having fun—we're a very selfish band. The only reason we play is to have fun and goof off. If we suck sometimes, we're having as much fun as when we're not sucking. Actually, I don't think we ever suck. Plenty of other bands out there gigging across the nation blow. But, uh, not us. We're very selfish. We'd like to find a way so more girls buy our records and come to the gigs. Haven't figured that out yet. That's really the trick right there... gotta get that down.

MRR: Give us a rundown of the usual Homostupids recording session. How long did *The Intern* take?

Steve: *The Intern* was our first record at a recording studio. Y'know, where you pay the person at a studio money and they record your band. *Birthday* and *Glow* EPs were four track recordings, all recorded by the same guy. Every record recorded by our friend Paul. Anyway, by the time we were ready to do *The Intern* album, Paul had his own studio and Parts Unknown gave us money to cover recording costs, so we went to Paul's studio and paid him some money, then spent the rest on beer and hot dogs and shit like that. Down the hall from the actual studio itself he's got this pretty large bathroom with lots of space in the middle. Thought it'd be cool to record in there, thought it'd sound interesting. Nope. Just made things more complicated. Impossible to mix. Every sound coming from every which way. Just a fucking mess. Worked out pretty great in the end though. I love the way the record sounds. Recorded on 12-track analog tape then mixed down to cassette tape. I think that record sounds fucking great. Josh's ridiculous guitar overdubs! Since then everything's been recorded at Paul's studio. Well, *The Edge* was four track at our practice space, but *Cat Music* is at his studio and so is our second LP, which is gonna come out…well, I have no idea when it's coming out. But we recorded it there too. Maybe it'll be out early 2009? I think. But who gives a fuck, right? [*looks down at watch*] Some guy was telling me the other day—Chad is his name—Chad was telling me that he shoots squirrels and has a recipe for squirrel gravy. Have you ever heard of squirrel gravy? Says it tastes close to sausage gravy. I do like sausage gravy. Ever hear of squirrel gravy, *Brendan*?

MRR: Nah, man. Sorry.

Steve: You douche! You fuck! You dumb douche prick fuck! Hey, don't let those douchebag fucks at *MRR* edit this thing down! Don't let 'em fucking touch it! Those fucks. Piss. Shit. And tell 'em we want the cover too. Can you do that, *Brendan*? Can you tell them that? Pussy, fuck, douche, piss!

MRR: [*Laughing*] Oh yeah, man, I've got some real pull around *MRR* headquarters. Gimme a break. So, I understand that *The Brutal Birthday* EP wasn't a product of the Homostupids, per se. What's that all about?

Steve: I would say it is a Homostupids record. It was recorded before the band was formed. I had been kicking around the band idea… Nothing was happening so, uh, I had to do something to keep myself motivated, I guess. I had some song ideas and fleshed them out with my roommates at the time, Joe, and Kevin, who played guitar in 9 Shocks and The Mormons with me. We're good friends. So, we recorded the songs that became *The Brutal Birthday* EP in my living room. I wrote "Homostupids" on the cassette. A few months later we had the band formed. We recorded *The Glow* EP and sent it to a bunch of record label pieces of shit and nobody wanted to put it out except for Charles who has a record store up the street. It came out and then all those douches that passed on it wanted to do a record with us. I said, "Suck my fucking dick." I wanted to put out the *Birthday* stuff at this point and knew if it was called "Steve and Kev" nobody would be interested, and the songs were written with the same ideas and influences that the band's songs were. We kind of re-did our own version of one or two of the songs and used riffs from some too, so I said fuck it. It was kind of funny that when we went out of town the first few times a lot of people had just heard the *Birthday* record and saw us playing whatever the fuck we're playing. Some people were pissed... especially in big old gay NYC. I mean "gay" like happy. Everyone is very happy in the Big Apple. I encourage all the gay people in every town to move there with all the wonderful gay people who are just like you. Anyway, in the long run, that record helped our band get over to different people who normally couldn't care less. That's one of the best parts of this band, to me—crossing over outside of just hardcore kids or garage kids. Also, it means more people at the gigs, which means more money at the door, which means we can drink better beer and eat better food.

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MRR: That's something I like about your band too, that it's so musically unclear. Opens the door for lots of different punk types to get a hook into it. What kind of differences have you noticed from your 9 Shocks days as far as the response and the sort of fans the Homostupids have?

Steve: With 9 Shocks we had a nice—towards the end—well, actually through most of it, we played for ten years, we had a nice assortment of people coming out. Some real mutants were coming out of the woodwork. It was great. I'd say that's the most irreplaceable part of that band—just some wonderful maniacs crawling out from the sewers to see that band. It was a lot of fun and I met some exceptional people. Met some real fucking douches too...mostly douches. I learned a lot from the yambags we dealt with then. Wedge, Tony, and Kevin were gallant troubadours in a sea of filthy diapers. [*gets up to use the bathroom*] I guess I'm having more fun now...before, I was just hating everyone and everything. Now, I just want to eat spicy food and listen to "Whad'Ya Know" and "Prairie Home Companion" and "Click and Clack" on the fuckin' radio.

MRR: You and those cashew-dicks Clockcleaner are self-proclaimed "skull music." Nobody seems to know what this means aside from you guys. Does it mean anything? Should we care?

Steve: [*loudly from bathroom*] Why do you say "cashew-dicks"?

MRR: That's one of Sharkey's (singer/guitarist of Clockcleaner) favorite phrases, it seems. I haven't read an interview in which he doesn't call somebody a "cashew-dick."

Steve: [*reenters with condescending smirk*] Oh. I wonder why he does that. That doesn't seem like a very nice thing to say to somebody.

MRR: Nobody likes having their penis called a cashew, I agree. So tell us about skull music. Or don't.

Steve: Yeah, I like how you say "cashew-penis," but you say Sharko says "cashew-dick." When you say "penis" it makes it sound smaller than when you say "dick." Y'know? Smaller, 'cause "penis" sounds small, and "dick" sounds B-I-G. But yeah, skull music! That means good music! John Jr. from Clockie Cleanie band and I are old buds. Used to eat poo and light off firecrackers in refrigerators together. We both liked skulls and music, so we decided that our two totally sweet bands were Skull Music. That's the best fucking answer anyone will ever get to that gay question.

MRR: Is your kinship with Clockcleaner anything more than being friends? Aside from them, what acts are up on the same level as your band, do ya think? What bands are really sticking their dick in the pie like you guys?

Steve: I don't understand that first part...but our band is digging on Plates from Buffalo very much, and Vagina Boys are also great and Lamps are also very good, and I like the new Portishead album, and I've been watching C-Span 2 a lot lately, and we like FNU Ronnies from Philly and Vegetative State from Columbus, who I think broke up. Uh...and

Shoot It Up, of course. What do you mean by that first part of the question though?

MRR: I mean that a lot of people like to throw you guys in the same boat with Clockcleaner and Out With a Bang and Shoot It Up and some other bands, though musically there's not a whole lot in common. It's just sort of the upper crust of garagey hardcore stuff that people from all walks, whether it be the Termbo crowd or the *MRR* ilk, enjoy and can get behind. You know what I'm saying?
Steve: Well, all of our bands are sweet and we all get along and have a similar sense of humor and all that. Most bands are pretty shitty, and most people have a lousy sense of humor, so when you find some good eggs, I guess you gotta stick together… I'm glad someone's paying attention. The tide will turn against us all sooner or later though.

MRR: How's that?
Steve: The young and important will decide that we're old and gross. Fuck 'em.

MRR: Alright, then. Now, Cleveland has quite the history of rock 'n' roll—and I don't mean that hall of fame. Electric Eels, Pagans, on up to 9 Shocks and Gordon Solie MoFos and the rest. I hate to ask you about your town, but c'mon, it's an essential question. Give us your thoughts on the city and its relationship to music, whatever they may be.
Steve: Notice the huge gap you left there. Everybody from outside of here drops the, "Ohhh, Electric Eels and Pagans! Ohhh, my pussy." Then to jump from the fucking Pagans to Gordon Solie? Jeepers creepers, guy! Spike in Vain was great, Numbskull, The Difficult, and Death of Samantha were spectacular, The Reactions, Boulder, Easter Monkeys, The Guns, New Salem Witchunters. Christ, so many good fucking bands from here and all you goofs ever mention is the fucking Pagans and Pere Ubu. I'll say though that all these bands and the oodles and oodles of bands before and after them—some current bands as well—these people in our shitty town have suffered for so long from this disconnect from what else is happening in the country. Musically, I'm talking here, of course. This total disconnect from what else is going on for the most part—what current trends are floating around in say, uh, Santa Cruz or fucking Park Slope or Philly or whatever. No real expectations, and for the most part, *no hope*. That's how I see it, at least. This can free you up to create something totally alienated and interesting. I don't know if this makes sense to you or not, but I stick to it. Yeahhhh, hardcore is real popular and we're gonna start a hardcore punk band, right—only we listen to more Blue Oyster Cult and Gun Club and our band is gonna sound like it crawled out of a microwave. Does this make sense? Of course, this isn't the case for all bands from here, but it's the case for most of the ones that stick out. It is why they stand out, in fact. Just this wonderfully depressing disconnect that we have here from the rest of you clowns.

MRR: Where do the Homostupids fit in all of this? Just a natural continuation of what you've described?
Steve: It's hard for me to say we fit in at all. We like what we're doing. We're good at what we're doing. What are we doing? I have no idea. That's a big chunk of the fun. And like I said to you before, we are a very selfish band. We're only in it for goofs.

MRR: Are those the defining characteristics of the band? Selfishness? Goofs? The lack of standards freeing you up from musical banality? Is that what makes the band tick?
Steve: Who says we're selfish?! Again, you're putting fucking words in my mouth! We let existing record labels put out our records. We're not one of these bands like Tragedy running a vanity label with only our band on it. We give others a chance at making some cash off our fucking band, y'know? Fucking vanity labels. Maybe that's just a west coast thing. "Lack of standards," you say? I told you like five times how I think our band is *the best band*! Jeez. I don't know what "banannaties" are though. I'm not gonna fuckin' do it "banal" with you, you sick fuck. I barely know you and I have a fucking girlfriend! What the fuck is going on over at that shit-eating, piss-fucking magazine of yours?

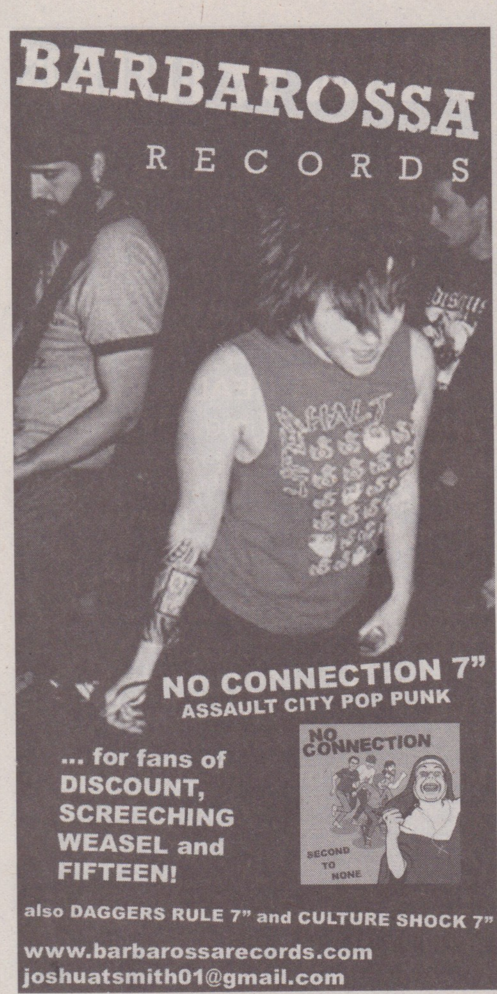
MRR: [*Laughing*] Here at *MRR* it's banal or bust. And yeah, we wear banana ties. Maybe Josh knows what I'm talking about? Maybe you should call him again?
Steve: Alright. [*calls Josh on speakerphone*]. Hey, this interview guy is asking us what the word "banus" means… Sorry, what the word "banal" means.
Josh: Uh…you mean like...in the butt?
Steve: That's what I said.
Josh: Wait a minute, I'll grab a dictionary. Okay, "anal: relating to, situated near, or involving the anus."
Steve: Looks like that settles it. What kind of fucking questions are you trying to go over on us here? Trying to make us look like dipshits? Do you ask fucking Sex/Vid these kinda questions?

MRR: You like Sex/Vid?
Steve: Sure. Their merch guy is nice too. They're a good live band. I like how they take a riff and work it for a minute and forty five seconds then end the song. I bet you treat them with more fucking professionalism than us, don't you!? Alright, let's wrap this up. Hey, can I give out the phone number for this Vietnamese restaurant down the street?

MRR: Sure. Give the restaurant's number and their best dish and send us off with what's in store for your band in the near future.
Steve: I don't know what their best dish is. You'll have to figure that out yourself. The phone is 216-228-4414. Nothing's in store for the band. We're doing nothing any time soon. Not going on the road. Not recording anything. Zip, zilch. I would like to say, though—to all my Hebrew brothers and sisters—L'Chayim!

Note: This interview was actually conducted entirely via email.

HOMOSTUPIDS



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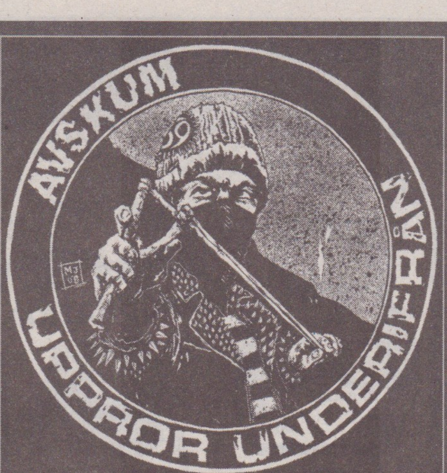

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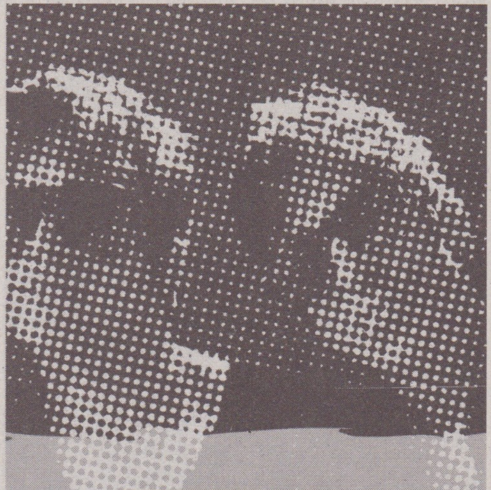

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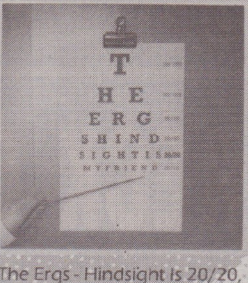

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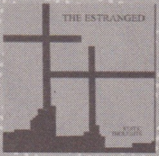

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THE YOLKS

Interview by Pat Reisinger
From Rocket Reducer Records/Distro

MRR: So I'm sitting here with the Yolks. What did you guys do today?
Nathan: Man, I just slept in, basically.
Spike: I went to work. I teach guitar and bass, and I run an eBay store where I sell merchandise like guitars, amps.

MRR: All right, Aaron, how about you?
Aaron: Just worked.

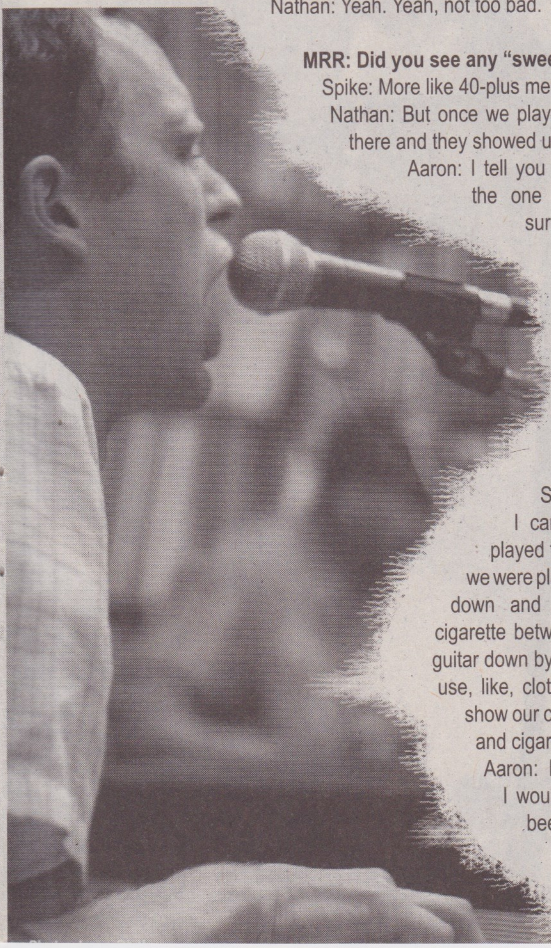
MRR: So, Nathan, your summer is progressing well, I see.
Nathan: Yeah. I teach high school at Crane High School in the west side of Chicago, and right now I've been off for about three weeks, and it's been pretty awesome.

MRR: Have you had any adventures since you got off?
Nathan: We went down to Lafayette one night, just to check out bands down there.

MRR: Who'd you see?
Nathan: We just caught the Sweet Sixteens. We also wanted to see the Traditional Fools and Plexi 3, but it took us too long to get down there. But we caught the Sweet Sixteens, but it was pretty sweet.
Spike: And we saw a sweet cross-dressing show.
Nathan: Yeah, there was a drag show right after the Sweet Sixteens 'cause it was at Zooleggers, which is a gay bar in Lafayette.

MRR: I didn't know that was a gay bar.
Nathan: Yeah. It's a gay bar that has, like, Bo Diddley and the Sonics on the jukebox, which is kinda magical.

MRR: Pretty cool place to be gay!
Nathan: Yeah. Yeah, not too bad.



MRR: Did you see any "sweet sixteens" there?
Spike: More like 40-plus men dressed as women.
Nathan: But once we played a house party down there and they showed up in droves.
Aaron: I tell you what, though, that was the one place we played—I'm sure I've told you this before—I wish I would have brought my camera that night. It was something else.
Nathan: Yeah, yeah. It was a lot of just picking up equipment as it was knocked down.
Spike: Yeah, the best way I can describe it when we played the house party was that we were playing our set and I looked down and there was someone's cigarette between my strings and the guitar down by the bridge, burning. We use, like, cloth cables, and after that show our cables just reeked of beer and cigarettes.
Aaron: I remember, every time I would hit my crash cymbal, beer would splash and spray into the air.
Spike: It was wet and wild!

MRR: Yeah, I know you guys do a lot of, like, jaunts. Have you considered doing a long tour?
Nathan: Yeah, I don't think we really do anything but jaunts. We've gone out of town…we've gone to five places, basically, in two years.

MRR: You know, when you play out of town you do one gig or, like, two gigs…
Aaron: That's primarily because of work. It's funny that you should ask what we did today and everyone said, "Work," except Nathan, who's a teacher, because I think that dictates our schedule and shows, and things like that. They're based on that we all have full-time jobs.

MRR: Lotta bands they have, like, all record store workers or some trust fund kids, or maybe some crusties—you guys are obviously not crusties.
Nathan: No, but I can get crusty sometimes.
Spike: Some of my parts are crusty.
Aaron: I think we may be the truest definition of crusties, actually.
Spike: But yeah, I think in due time we'll take our act on the road, but just waitin' for when we can all get two weeks off.
Aaron: I would like to do something even longer than that.
Nathan: Yeah, next year we're probably going to put something together and all take a break from our real lives, and go on tour for…a long while.

MRR: I mean, you've got the album coming out. Is that all in the can?
Nathan: We've got about half of it recorded now. Well, half of it's started. We're trying to get it done by next summer at the latest.
Spike: It'll be done by winter, hopefully.
Aaron: *This* winter.

MRR: Once you get to winter there's not much to do.
Spike: Most of the songs, I mean we pretty much have it written, it's just a matter of really getting the songs down, and getting it recorded.

MRR: You've got pretty good consistency in terms of your recorded sound. You guys record yourselves, so obviously you know what you're looking for.
Spike: We have a little different setup this time around. The first recordings, we recorded, like, a lot of the drum mics on one overhead and one on the kick. Now we have a few more mics, a little different setup, so it should be a little more crisp recording.
Nathan: We try to do the best we can.
Aaron: The best thing is just as clear of a recording we can achieve with what we have. I feel like the limitations define themselves. We have limitations that are outside of us, that we can't control.

MRR: I think your sound sort of determines it…you don't have a lot of open space in your sound, so there's going to be a little bleed through on anything you do.
Aaron: Yeah, in other words, the fuzz, and everything you hear, it's pretty much based on the natural limitations.
Spike: Yeah, for the most part we try to record the way our songs sound live. We don't do a lot of fancy production. I've got a computer and we just record with ProTools…

MRR: When you record, do you record live?
Spike: Some songs we do. Like the Bachelor 7", the instrumental song, we did that live. We'll probably do that more with this album, because now can run more mics at the same time.

MRR: You're not gonna, like, sit in your bedroom for three years and do overdub after overdub.
Spike: Like we said, we all have jobs.

MRR: Speaking of that Bachelor 7", you got some pretty solid reviews for the most part. Did you read the reviews? It seems like there's not much to gain out of rave reviews.

Nathan: It makes you feel all warm and fuzzy. You read it and you're like, "Yeah, that's a nice one. That's pretty sweet."

Spike: I've got a theory that it's easy for someone to say, "Yeah, this is awesome! This is great music!" But I think that once you start getting actual criticism, then you know you're in a good band, because it takes a certain amount of hype for people to hate on it.

MRR: So you think that since people have just been saying good stuff, there's not really much that you can change, since they haven't been pointing to stuff that you should change?

Nathan: Well, we're not really going to just go out and change something just because a reviewer doesn't like it.

Spike: But sometimes it opens your eyes to certain things. I know that *Terminal Boredom* did a really good review of the tape we released on Pizza Party records, and those were just a bunch of songs that we didn't want to release that we sent to Richie (of Pizza Party Records), and we were like, "Yeah, if you wanna put some of these on tape, go ahead." And then they really liked one of the songs that was on the tape. And looking back you think, "Yeah, that song *was* really good!"

MRR: What has your experience been like here? Getting gigs, moving up on the bill, stuff like that?

Spike: When we first started, we played anything. It's funny now, we can, y'know, sort of turn down gigs sometimes. When we first started we used to play, like, birthday parties…

Aaron: I can remember one time just sitting down thinking with Spike and just, y'know, compiling a list of bands that we thought might have some of the same influences as us or seemed to have something similar in terms of sound or style to the songs that we were playing, and just asking them, just going up to them and saying, "Hey, can we try to set up a show?" I'll speak for myself, I didn't know there was a self-sustaining garage rock scene, I mean, I was aware of certain bands, but I didn't know that there was a *circuit* in Chicago.

Nathan: And, unlike, a lot of bands, none of us had any bands before this one, for the most part.

Spike: Well, I had played in some bands, but more like, y'know, some hardcore stuff.

MRR: Yeah, that's one of the issues I see in Chicago. Every band is made up of other bands.

Aaron: A lot of the people I've met, they've known each other for years, they've played in various bands together, so when they start a new band, they're previously known, so they already have an audience, friends, and people that are waiting on their music to come out, because they already know them from someplace else. We came from someplace where we had to introduce ourselves to a lot of people for the first time, like, "Hey, I'm so-and-so."

Spike: That also made it so we didn't draw too many influences from bands that are playing right now. Except Nate really liked the Milkshakes a lot, and y'know, they're not around, but Billy Childish is still Billy Childish. That's the most modern band we liked! When we started, we were just playing, like, "Peggy Sue" covers and just, good old rock and roll.

MRR: Come around just listening to Bo Diddley, Chuck Berry records and just, like, decide to start a band.

Spike: Yeah, exactly. But then when we started writing songs, it started sounding more modern. But I attribute a lot of getting into that scene in Chicago like Cococoma. Because we were a no-name band, and they were a pretty big band, and we just emailed them and were like, "Hey, we're playing a show at Ronny's."

Nathan: And this was before people were really playing at Ronny's…that happened a couple months later. We just, had us and a DJ on that show.

Spike: And they were cool enough to just take some no name band and be like, "Yeah we'll play with you guys." And they even opened up! That brought a lot of people in to see them, and a lot of them were like, "Who's this band that's playing, like, Little Richard covers?"

MRR: Do you have any plans on stopping playing covers?

Nathan: Personally, I like doing covers. I always thought it'd be something like half originals and half covers. I mean, recently it's gotten to be way less covers, which is fine. But I just like playing other people's songs. Like Spike said, one of my favorite bands is the Milkshakes…half the songs they do are other people's songs.

Spike: And we all DJ. Like, we went and DJed the other night, and one thing I realized is that people like to hear the hits.

Aaron: Play the hits!

Spike: Yeah, and we play songs like "What'd I Say" because, y'know, people love that song. And why not give it to them? I think people are too concerned with putting their own spin on things. If you can pull a hit off, that's going to get everybody going.

MRR: You guys are a real audience-oriented band. Free shows all the time, you play house shows, you play stuff that people can dance to. Is that something you purposefully set out to do?

Nathan: Absolutely.

Aaron: If nothing more, coming from a background of spinning records and collecting records, that's how we got down, initially, even before we started playing instruments. If people can feel it and move to it, then as far as I'm concerned, that's it. When I go out and play a show, I want to make people have as much fun as I'm having, dancing and moving around.

Spike: When we first started playing, we just said, "We wanna make music that people want to dance to." And writing songs and making records people liked was just an afterthought. I remember thinking that I never cared about recording songs, just thinking, "Yeah, let's go out and make the party happen."

MRR: What bands are you excited about these days?

Nathan: Well, obviously Nobunny and the Okmoniks. We also like the Wax Museums, Boys Club…

Spike: Yeah, I think there's a lot of good Midwestern bands…Eric and the Happy Thoughts, Sweet Sixteens, Romance Novels, Boys Club, the Real Numbers.

Aaron: The last LP I got was the Vivian Girls LP. Even before we started, I loved girl groups, doo wop. I love the Shirelles, and they have a bit of that flavor. And then later on I got into the Husbands and the Pandoras, stuff like that. So I just caught on to that flavor. So whenever a new band is doing something like that, I check it out.

Spike: Oh and no one stacks up to the Donnas.

Nathan: We just listened to the first Donnas LP today.

Spike: Hell, we covered "Girl Like You."

Nathan: Yeah, for the cover of our tape for Pizza Party we took the picture of them from the cover of their first LP and put our heads on their bodies.

Photo: Jesse Blythe

MRR: So what do you see as the immediate future of rock and roll?
Nathan: Well, right now I think that traditional rock and roll is making a resurgence…
Spike: Yeah, I like all the bands that are kinda big right now, like, King Khan & BBQ, Black Lips, Jay Reatard, all that stuff. I don't care about the hype. I think they're kinda paving the way for a lot of us little guys.

MRR: What do you think of all the mainstream coverage they're getting?
Nathan: I think it's awesome. I think people are haters. Once a band gets big and gets a lot of press they think that now it's not special to them. They think, "Oh, this used to be cool and I was the only one, and now my little sister listens to the Black Lips."
Aaron: I hear that all the time.

MRR: I don't know that's necessarily true, I think people hate the media, but not the band.
Spike: Yeah, but once you get to a certain level of hype, you have to kinda hate on it.

MRR: Yeah, but once you get to that certain level of hype there's a better chance than not that you're gonna suck.
Spike: All right, well the Black Lips last record wasn't as good as the one before, but that one was a hard one to top.

MRR: I'm not saying they suck *yet*, but they're going to suck.
Yolks: We'll see.

MRR: I mean, even the Stones started to suck.
Aaron: They're 90!

MRR: Are you a goal-directed band, which is to say, you obviously have a sound that you're trying to achieve? Anyone who listens to the record knows that. Are you trying to do *only* that? If you start to deviate from this '50s/'60s rock and roll sound, do you call it quits, or do you accept it?
Nathan: I think in general, my main goal is I want to play shows where people have fun and want to party. I just want to play the type of music that people can get down to. The kind of stuff I wanna hear.
Aaron: I don't think it has anything to do with thinking into the future or anything. I'm agreeing with Nathan, though. That's always been the objective since the beginning. It's never changed for me. If we're playing and I can look out and see people having fun, we did it. You know, I'm a drummer, I wanna become a better drummer, but that's a separate issue.
Spike: I don't consider us a throwback band.
Aaron: It's funny that you emphasize people who review you or media type stuff, because I think reviewers have called us a throwback band more than we've ever considered ourselves throwback.
Spike: Yeah, maybe we sound like that because most of the music we like is from the '60s, but not because we sat down and thought, "Okay, how do we do this, how do we pomp our hair?" And I think a lot of our songs don't sound '60s. I don't think "I Do What I Do" or "Wandering," or "Don't Blame Me" or any of those songs, sound '60s. The one song we've got on record that sounds '60s is the instrumental.
Nathan: We cover the Gizmos, Ramones, and the Sneaky Pinks, you know what I mean? We're trying to get the whole history of rock and roll.

MRR: But what happens if you do deviate from "true rock and roll"?
Nathan: Well, as time goes by I don't think you can help it. I mean I don't wanna make a fuckin' *Magic Mystery Tour* album or some shit like that. I'd rather put out 50 of the first three Kinks albums forever and ever, you know?
Spike: We never sat down and said, like, "This is the kind of music we're going to play." But once you realize what you are, there's no point in trying to be something else.

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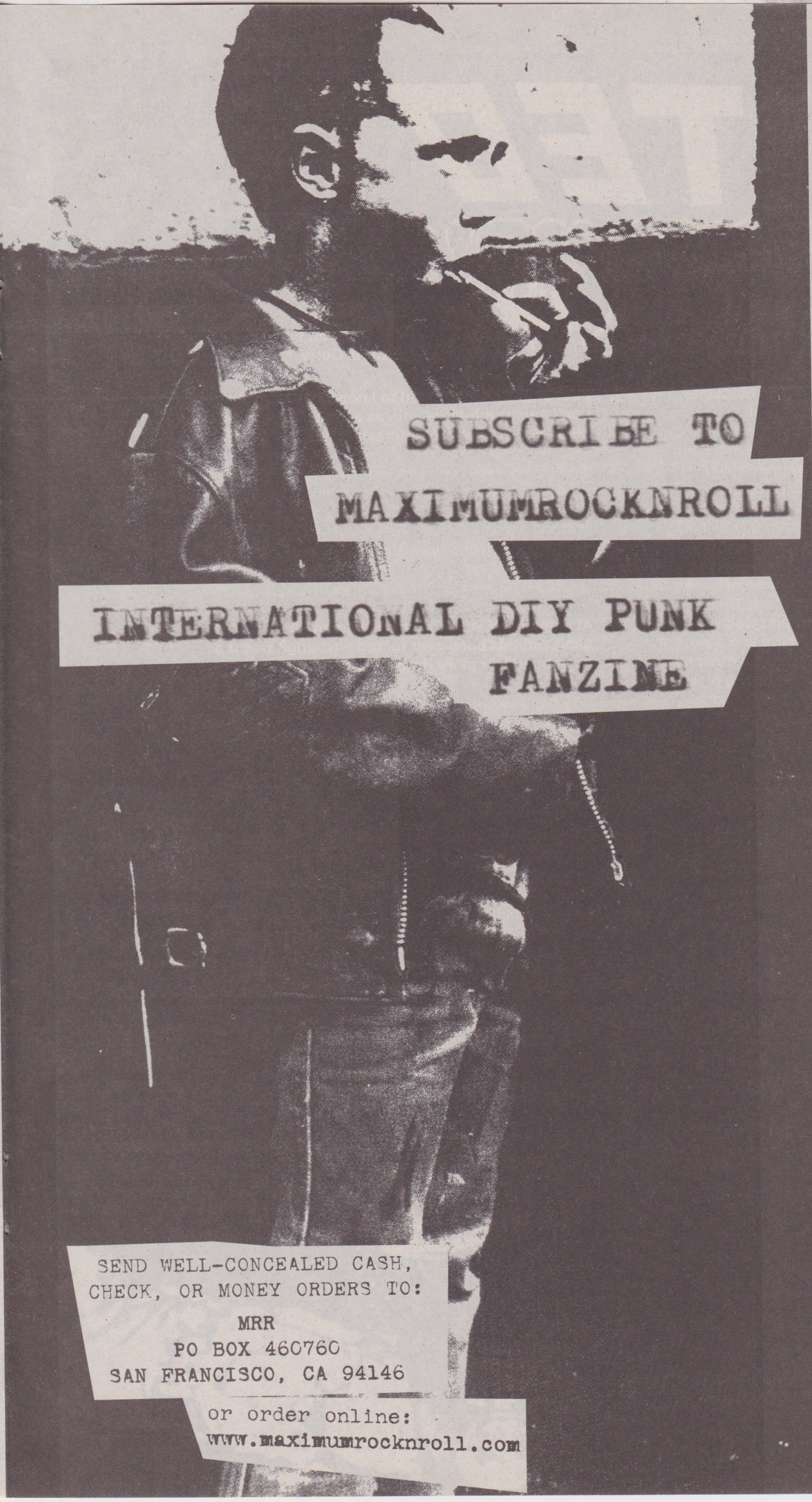

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UNITED MUTATION

Interview with bassist Jay Fox
by: Chris Corry

For those not aware, United Mutation were a Hardcore band founded in suburbs of Virginia outside of Washington D.C. in the early 80's as the scene there was having its premature climax. But despite being from a relatively prominent locale during a relatively fruitful time period, United Mutation continue to be one of the most overlooked and mysterious bands of their era. In their day they released two 7"s on their own D.S.I. label, Fugitive Family (which was a co-release with Dischord), and Rainbow person, as well as making some regional compilation appearances. Rather than go the tuneful and melodic route that most of their DC peers took, United Mutation cooked up isolated, unsettling, and atonal hardcore/punk that was much more abrasive and dark than anything else from DC at the time, with the exception of Void. Their vocalist Mike Brown is noted as one of the first singers of any genre to take a heavy gutteral vocal attack, eventually predicting a hundred gurgley singers from a hundred different micro-genres of hardcore, punk, grind, whatever. All of their recordings "matter", and I think anyone interested in Hardcore, Punk, Rock 'n Roll, or any violent, rebellious music for outsiders would do well to check them out.

I'm exceedingly grateful to have gotten a response from Jay Fox who played bass in United Mutation through their run, and for being able to pick his brain on the band's run. Hopefully this will shed some light on a band that often goes unseen in the shadows.
Read on...

First off, I'd be interested to know how you got into punk music, hardcore, etc. as a youth. Just a general idea of where your life intersected with those things...

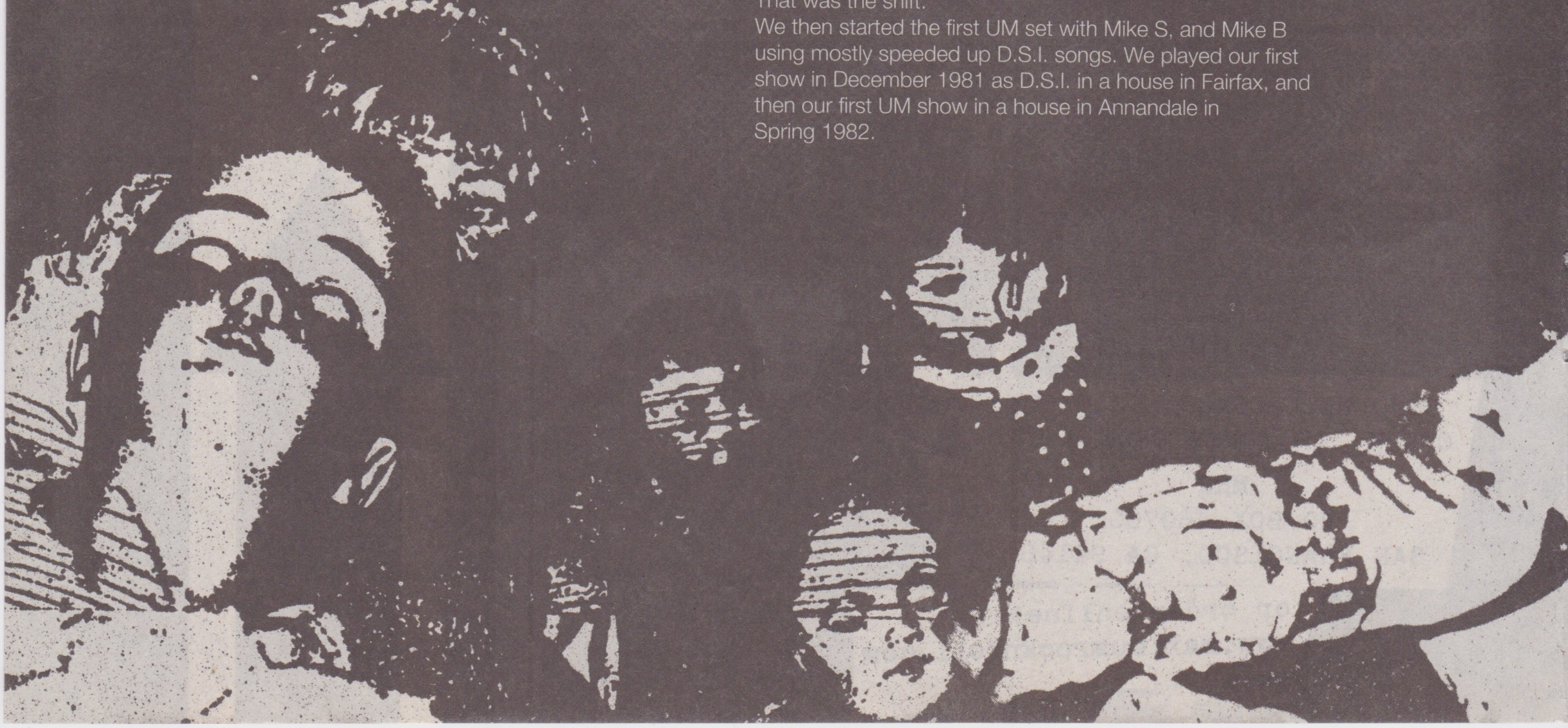
Jay Fox: I got into punk rock in 1978 along with my brother John. We shopped at a Head shop over on Little River Turnpike called Penguin Feather. They had lots of cool stuff and a great used bin. We also were reading CREEM magazine which had lots of photos/articles about the first wave bands.

At some point (1981?) Dark Self Image began as a band, did this band ever record anything? Was it a punk band? Or more Prog/Pscyhe?

Dark Self Image has a handful of demos that we recorded on a portable cassette player Most are pretty raw. I have a few tracks that are over onto CD at this point. A handful of the songs kept reoccurring into various UM etc sets...We were a garage band mostly, did a handful of covers by Joy Division, Cramps, Sonics, Slickee Boys etc...

Can you break down the basics of the transition from Dark Self Image to United Mutation?

D.S.I. became UM after D.S.I. broke up due to members leaving the area, or giving up on Rock n Roll. Mike Brown came over one night , and we were jamming with Mike Salkind, and Mike grabbed the mic, and started growling. That was the shift.
We then started the first UM set with Mike S, and Mike B using mostly speeded up D.S.I. songs. We played our first show in December 1981 as D.S.I. in a house in Fairfax, and then our first UM show in a house in Annandale in Spring 1982.



What were the musical influences that United Mutation had? Were you trying to emulate other punk bands or were there other punk bands you admired? I've read you were really into Hawkwind were they a big influence at the time? Were there other Prog or Psyche bands that you were into? Were you guys into any underground metal stuff like Bathory or Venom?

UM influences we're pretty much all sorts of punk, pre punk like Iggy, Velvet Underground, San Francisco hippie bands like Jefferson Airplane, Country Joe & the Fish, Zappa, 13th Floor Elevators. We never tried to emulate DC Hardcore bands but listened to all of them, but we did try to follow in the steps of pre HC bands like the Slickees, the Nurses, White Boy, 1/2 Japanese and those other non HC bands that we were listening to in advance of the HC thing. Hawkwind ruined me on Prog rock for the most part, all those prog bands sounded weak in comparison to the space biker grunge of Hawkwind. I liked certain bands like King Crimson, and such, but Hawkwind were are my favs. John Fox and I had an all Hawkwind band for awhile, and I have a complete set of Hawkwind songs that I recorded with friends here in Colorado last winter. Kind of like the Minutemen playing Hawkwind. Personally I listened to mostly American Hardcore during the 1980's SST, Touch & Go, Alternative Tentacles... Euro bands, mostly Crass type hippie punker stuff. Not too much in the Drunken Boot Boy stuff, though I did go see most of those bands when they toured. We went to most every show from 1982-1986 in DC. Then selected ones after that. Personally after that I was busy with our bands that I didn't really spend too much time on the scene, until about 1991 when I started going to see bands again, that we weren't playing with, plus my brother John was booking shows in NOVA. So we saw lots of shows that we put on. Billy Fox was into the metal thing, and Mike Clayberg, I never really got too involved, I liked/like the weirder more druggy stuff, like Butthole Surfers, SST bands like firehose, Huskers, not to much metal.

When you heard Mike's vocals what did you think? A lot has been said about how brutal his delivery was, especially for the time period. Was it what you were expecting? Were some people turned off by the way he sang?

We laughed our asses off at Mike Browns vocals. He was one of the first with that style. I don't care what anyone says. In 1981 he was breaking ground. Period. I don't think we had any expectations. Mike did become a pretty good singer over all. He did progress around Rainbow Person era into something other then a growler. Mike in the Studio was funny as shit. Listening to just the voice with no music was priceless

What were early United Mutation gigs like? Were they mostly house parties? Who did you play with?

The first UM shows were all House parties. We played with mostly NOVA bands. PBI (Steve Hansgen's pre Minor Threat band), Scream, Media Disease (pre Malefice), #1 Priority. Lots of other groups. Our first real show was at the 9:30 club matinee. Gigs were funny, we did stuff like playing Skynyrd, and Dead songs, Flipper... just to fuck with the normal jerks who showed up, as well as screwing with the punks. It was fun to make people confused. We played in peoples parents living rooms..and caused furniture to be broken.

Prior to the Fugitive Family 7", how many studio recordings did the band produce? My understanding is that there were 2 demos, one of which was culled partially for the Mixed Nuts compilation. Is this correct? I believe these are both compiled on the CD anthology released on Lost and Found but are there any additional tracks from either one, or any other sessions from that time period?

UM had 2 demos prior to Fugitive Family, one with Sean Sumner from PBI on drums, before he moved to Richmond, and joined Death Piggy, one with Mike Salkind. The session with Sean was included on the LP, and CD, the Mike Salkind one was on Mixed Nuts, and the CD. We have a demo from 1983 which is the first demo with Steve Kirkland on drums, and some other basement demos, one with Billy Fox that really kills. That has never seen the light of day. Sadly. We have at least another disc of outtakes we could release. In overview, we have at least 7 or 8 UM demos, 5 from Inner Ear.

Were you able to gauge Don Zientara's reaction to these recordings at all while they were being done (correct me if they were done somewhere else besides Inner Ear)? How did other people react to these demos? Were they ever sold as with covers as an official tape release, or were they just passed amongst friends?

Don is great, he introduced us to Ian MacKaye, which helped us in some way I'm sure. Dischord is the greatest, the people who worked there in the 1980's thru today are all awesome, helpful, nice humans. I have nothing but respect for everything they have done not just in DC but in the world in general. Dischord bands have had a safe house to stay in my home for years. As far as how did people react... I don't know we were always outside the realm of what people thought. We always got good reviews in Flipside, MRR and the other zines of the era. We never released any tape demos.

At what point did it seem like people outside of Virginia/DC/Maryland became aware of United Mutation? How did the partnership with Dischord co-releasing Fugitive Family with D.S.I. records come about? It seems like UM's sound and non-straight edge vibe would have been at odds with some of the bands on Dischord, were they into what you guys were doing, or just trying to be supportive of another local band?

We asked Dischord and they helped us out. It was extremely cool of them. It helped us get D.S.I. a bit of credit in the outside world. I don't really know if they liked or didn't like us, We got to play with lots of Dischord bands so we must not have been too big of dicks. In general we were always supportive of them, and they were the same with us. We didn't hang out at Dischord House. We had our own house. I guess we got out of the DC area due to national distribution and zine reviews, and folks like Jello Biafra saying he dug our stuff.

When Fugitive Family was released was there any change in the way people seemed to be perceiving the band because of the Dischord connection? What was the coverage like in zines in terms of reviews or interviews? How were you in touch with New Mexico's Jerry's Kidz (thanked inside the record)? After Fugitive Family was released, did any other labels offer to do records for you?

We got better gigs that's for sure, airplay helped as well. NM Jerry's Kidz were friends of our original singer John Hardin who had moved to Albu NM around the time Mike joined as vocalist. Jerry's Kidz are great. We got stuff out on most DC labels, Fountain Of Youth put a track on Bouncing Babies, WGNS gave us a track, Outside of course, then the Germans as well. We're still getting people who contact us about putting out discs, at least a couple a year. But nobody who we really want to trust with our catalog, or who has said, heres a ton of cash to fix everything and give us a CD. We could easily give out 2 CDs of stuff, and I could fill a whole CD with new tracks personally... Its just the money issue etc..

Were there any crazy shows that UM played during this time period? Were there any big crowd reactions that you can remember? I've seen very few live photos...

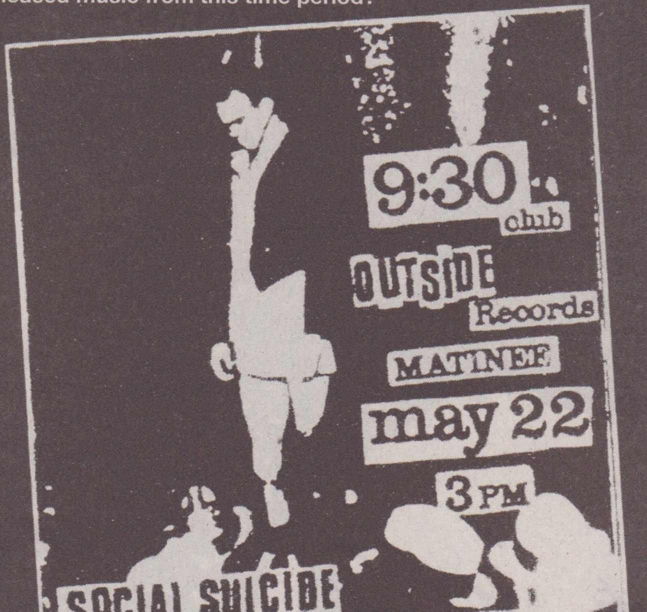
We played with Dead Kennedys, Butthole Surfers, MDC, Meatmen, 9353, Flipper, Scream, Marginal Man, Beefeater, Double O, MFD, Media Disease... All of the big shows were crazy. Best crowd was playing at Burke Community Center with Lunch Meat Kids for Cash and Mission Impossible. The kids hated us and our Beer drinking leather clad friends from the city. We laughed sooooo hard. Of course all those bands became punk bands for the most part, and more then likely grew up from where they were at that time. DK's show was packed and fun. I don't know if we ever had the kind of reactions that other bands did... We just played and that was it.

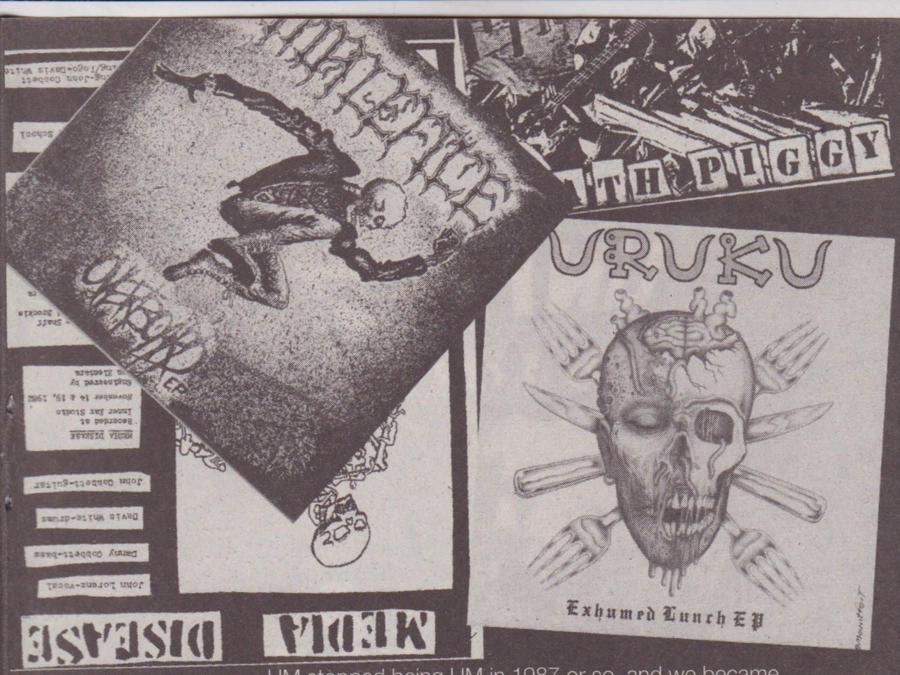
The Rainbow Person E.P. was released in 1985, and departs somewhat in sound from all the previous United Mutation stuff (although it tends to be my favorite out of all of your recordings), is there anything in particular that inspired the evolution of your sound or was it something that just "happened"? What was the reaction people had to this material versus the previous record and comp tracks? Were there any other songs recorded during the Rainbow Person session? Who recorded the crazy guy in between songs on this record? (If it says on the record insert, my apologies, it's missing from my copy!)

RP was an obvious trend from the FF E.P., it was kind of like lets do a whole set of Lice and Flies...There is a bunch of unmixed outtakes. We did like 13 songs in that session, plus most of the songs on the E.P. were done 3 times, so it was quite a session at the end of the day. I guess people liked it, the FF E.P. is still the most popular due to the Dischord connection. Oddly a lot of people really like the Mike Salkind era....

I like the RP stuff personally as well. It was solid and Steve was a greatgreatgreat drummer. Crazy guy was interviewed in Old Town Alex just some drunk on the skids. He was also on the Malefice LP Lotus Blossom.

How did the end of United Mutation come about? Was there an official last show? What session is the track on the Alive and Kickin' comp taken from? Is there more unreleased music from this time period?





UM stopped being UM in 1987 or so, and we became Bullhead, all the same musicians, doing weird Hawkwind type stuff, and more jazz-punkish stuff like Alter-Natives from Richmond, or firehose. Never did a final show as we never did stop, it just kind of fizzled out. We recorded in 1994 or 96, then again in 2003. We did a series of shows as UM in NOVA with the Suspects, and Little big Head from Baltimore must have been around 1993-94 or so around the time of the 10th anniversary of RP. Sensations Fix was from RP sessions.

Would you consider United Mutation to have been a "political band"?

UM was a political band for sure. In the kind of MDC MRR vein. I think that's way we ended up on those bills. We hated Reagan and Daddy Bush big time.

In the Banned In DC photo book there's a quote from Mike Clayburg that reads: "...United Mutation played about once a year maybe, when they got out of the basement. They practiced about four or five times a week. They didn't like to play out much." Would you say this is pretty accurate? Did United Mutation ever play out of state or was it strictly a local thing?

Mikes statement was true, we did practice 3-4 times a week, and didn't play out that much, there wasn't that many good shows to play, and we were selective in our choices... Lazy... Maybe. We did stay around the DC/VA/MD area for the most part. None of us were really prepared to be punk rock stars or even cared.

Could you elaborate on United Mutations ties with these bands: (I'm aware some were sort of like brother bands, and some I don't know if there was any connection or not, so if there wasn't just say that I guess)

-Malefice - best friends, band mates, label mates.

-Uruku - Rick Spine did UM cover art, Davis was in Media Disease/Malefice.

-Media Disease - best friends, bandmates, label mates

-Death Piggy - label mates, friends

-White Cross - just state connection, never played w/ WC

-Dove - no real connection other friendship with Toni, Eric L

-Nuclear Crayons - Lynch went to College with John Fox, got us on Outside records. Bernie is Killer guy.

-No Trend - Mike Salkind joined after he left UM, otherwise no real connections. I was invited to join them but declined the offer.

-Void - never played with them, or really knew any of them. Love the record, listened to it just this week.

-The Obsessed - Mike was friends of sorts with Wino, I have no real opinion of them, I sold the E.P. I had from them for good money. Maybe like $50 bucks...

Were you into Die Kreuzen (WI) or The Scam (NH) when they were around, I think their records have some similar qualities as United Mutation's. Just kind of wondering if you were aware of them at the time, I guess Die Kreuzen were a pretty big name...

I like Die Kruezen, early stuff, and the directions after that. I play with a guy out here who was in that scene. He saw them all the time, and says they were UM fans just like we were their fans.

Was United Mutation on the Mutopia tape comp? (Also do you have a copy of this?)

UM was not on Mutopia, It was designed to showcase other D.S.I. bands not us. No I don't have a copy, but would like to hear it again. I'm sure John Fox has a copy somewhere

How did the anthology releases on Bitzcore and Lost and Found come about? Both labels have reputations as being shady towards the artists they've dealt with do you feel they treated you fairly?

Bitzcore and L&F contacted us, and were both cool. We never had any issues with either. None of us love the CD other then the fact that its out. We would never have released it in the format it came out if we had been asked. The LP was our baby. Bitzcore were righteous about the whole thing. I don't think we ever got burned by either label, and I have no feelings other then gratitude to both of them

How did you guys come up with artwork ideas? Were there ever United Mutation shirts made during the band's existence?

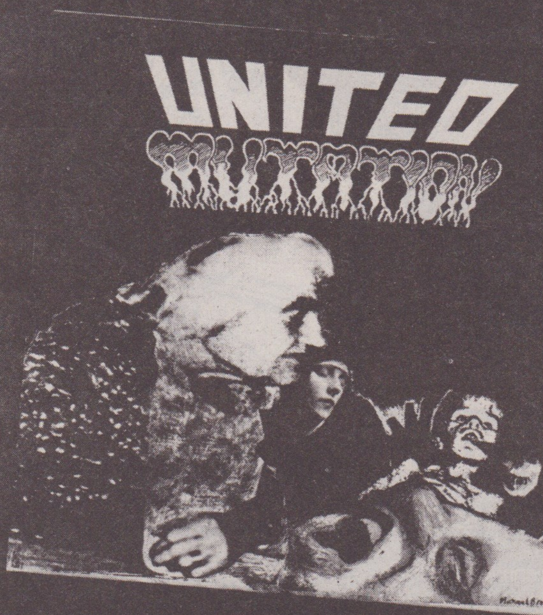
Artwork was band decided, Mike Brown did the First E.P., Rick Spine and Crevo did the 2nd. Mike Brown did the lp, the L&F stuff the Germans did. We did have tee shirts made, and L&F did as well. Some guy contacted us a few years ago, and did a small run for the internet, I still think they are available if you do a search.

I heard this rumor that was kind of ridiculous but, perhaps you can confirm or deny that mike had to smoke a ton of cigarettes in order for his voice to be sufficiently brutal prior to a gig. True/false?

False. Mike never smoked Cigs

Is there anything you would like people to take away from listening to the band now?

We hope that people still like the stuff, and hope to get the catalog re-released soon. The RP is in the works for a fall release on my label. We'll see.
Currently Mike Brown is still doing music, Billy Fox is still doing music, Mike Salkind is doing music, I'm still doing music, John Fox is playing Hawaiian music for fun. That's it. Sign up for my blog page, as I'm writing a complete history of our bands etc....
Thanks for asking.
Peace.
Jay



MUTOGRAPHY:

v/a - Mixed Nuts Don't Crack LP
Outside Records #2 - 1983
1000 copies on black vinyl w/info sheets for each band + lyrics. Came sealed from the pressing plant but was then unsealed to have inserts added to each copy.

Fugitive Family 7"
D.S.I. #1 / Dischord 10 7/8 - 1983
1000 copies on black vinyl w/ insert.
Fugitive Family - Plain Truth / Final Solution / Passout // I Know a Place / Own Way / Lice and Flies...

2nd press - 1989
500 copies w/ extra track, without insert.
Fugitive Family - Plain Truth / Final Solution / Passout / It's Over // I Know a Place / Own Way / Lice and Flies...

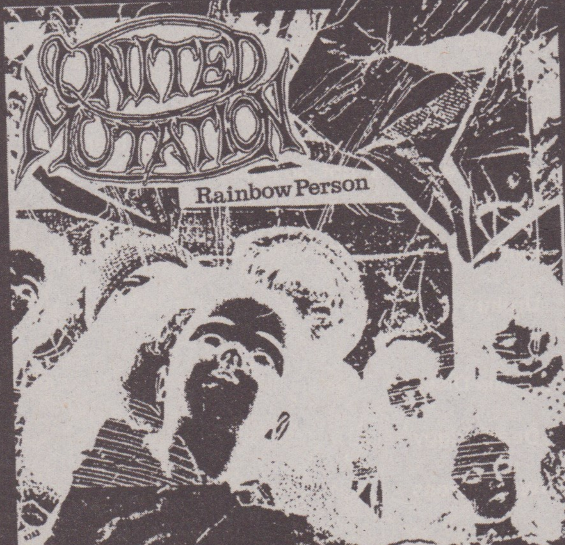
v/a - Bouncing Babies
Fountain of Youth Records #7
1000 copies on black vinyl.
as The Last Minute - "Infinite Regression"

John Fox (United Mutation) 4-29-85
MICHAEL SALKIND

Rainbow Person 7"
D.S.I. #4 - 1985
800 copies on black vinyl w/foldover cover and insert
225 copies on black vinyl w/pocket cover
75 copies on black vinyl w/xeroxed pocket cover

2nd press - 1989
500 copies on blue vinyl w/foldover cover and insert

v/a - Alive and Kicking
WGNS/Metrozine Records - 1985
2000 white vinyl
"Sensations Fix"

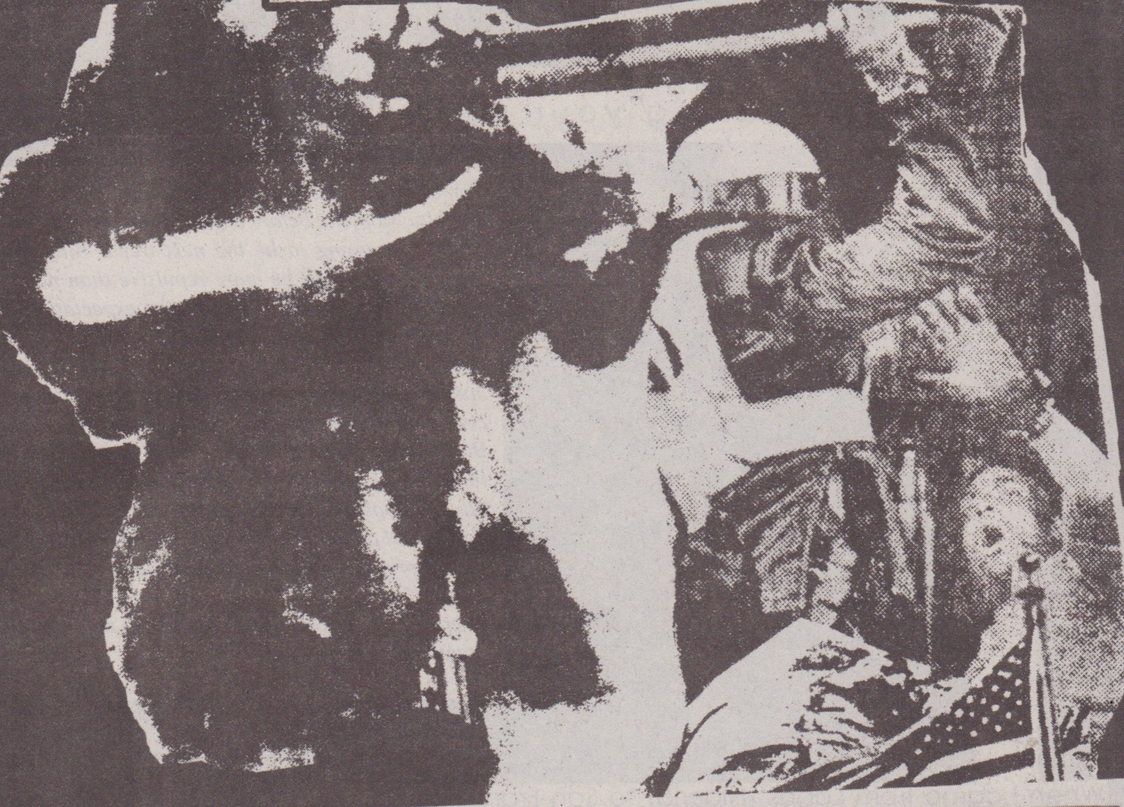


Freaks Out LP anthology
Bitzcore / efa. 01659
2000(?) pressed w/ inner sleeve
(compiles both 7"s and early demo/live tracks)

Kyo Ki 7"
Lost and Found Records #10 - 1990
2000 copies mostly as part of L&F 5x7" boxet, blue vinyl
(compiles the full 9 song 'Mixed Nuts' session)

Götterdämmerung 7"
Lost and Found Records #28 - 1991
500 made w/ large hole & glued sleeve
(1st 5 tracks are live in 1987, last 2 tracks are from an early demo)

united mutation



MICHAEL SALKIND

United Mutation at WUST Radio Hall 4-29-85

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get to know their systems get to know their needs give them all the pleasure until they are on their knees

they are taking your eyes
they are taking your mind

For a minute, it seemed like Billy Bao was riding the crest of the new wave of mephitic slop, but before anyone could say that this dirgey, abrasive, cacophonous sound was going to be the next trend, Billy Bao shifted direction. Nothing, it seems, baby, could be more repulsive than popularity, so Billy Bao has made a career of sorts out of disappointing expectations. Even the record largely agreed to be the best one, the "Fuck Separation" 10", seems like a sly trick, meant to convince the afficionadoisie that Billy Bao was likable. No ma'am. Billy Bao is as much attempting to distort listeners' perceptions as trying to tear down the social conditions that shape their perceptions. If there's something refreshing about Billy Bao's standoffishness (visible even in what was meant to be a relatively benign interview below), it's the sense that the rigorous fuck you of punk rock can actually be a positive project concerned with the transformation of social relations. I don't smell anything musty about Billy Bao's anti-capitalist g(h)oulash, as it is one for the present era, when its necessity is felt ever more desperately.

Interview via e-mail by Layla Gibbon and Stuart Schrader. Intro by Stuart Schrader.

When I came from Lagos (Nigeria) to San Francisco (Bilbao) life was tough here or there.I did not mind, I had a purpose in my life: to fight the system that fucks up everyday of our life. Back in my hometown, I was an unknown songwriter but, as soon as I arrived to the streets of Bilbao, I discovered Punk Rock.It had energy and attitude and was exactly what I needed.

Next thing was to get a band.

this is a fucking dictatorship
this is a fucking dictatorship
this is a fucking dictatorship

do you understand?

billy bao

get to know their systems get to know their needs give them all the pleasure until they are on their knees

MRR: Your album cover features a child with a Vulpess 7" in hand. Is Billy Bao a punk band?
Billy Bao is me.

MRR: The Billy Bao story seems almost mythic, is it true? If not (or if so) what function does it serve?
Of course it's true!

MRR: What does the name Billy Bao represent? The connection to a specific place (Bilbao) a person, an idea?
I represent myself, Billy Bao, which funnily enough my name is similar to Bilbao. Bilbao is right now a contemporary circus. In the '80s it was different—a lot of heroin, riots on the streets, bombs here and there, and now you just have museums and galleries. We should take the streets before the public space becomes a catwalk.

MRR: Do you feel part of the lineage of the Basque punk scene?
No. There is not any Basque punk scene anymore... But there are interesting people like Xedh, Akauzazte, Loty Negarty, Anorexia Mental...What is Basque? What is punk? What is a scene? If you ask about kicking motherfucking dudes with attitude and guitars living in the north of Spain, I do not think there's any punk alive in the Basque country. They all died during the '80s.

MRR: Have you played shows?
Yes, the last show was in a pop/rock place in Bilbao and we had to pay 150 euros after the concert. The sound engineer was a wanker. We did not win.

MRR: What do you want from your audience? What response have you gotten?
What should we expect from an audience that pays money to destroy their ears every weekend? Response? In France some people went to the stage, took our instruments and started to play for much longer than we did, they did actually played much better, but they did not get paid as we did.

MRR: Do you feel there's a connection between Billy Bao and any current/contemporary bands within the context of the punk scene? Who?
Mattin and Xabi gave me some records... I like noise like Whitehouse but also Luigi Nono, Maurizia, Leon Eta Basilio, Billy Boys, Billy Bond Y La Pesada, and some bands I don't remember the names right now. Ah, Karkaba, Zanussi, XYX.

MRR: Do you see as punk an idea/possibility or a specific subcultural reference?
Punk is about confidence and attitude with or without reason, no matter what you do or what you play or weather you have talent, as long as you have enough anger accumulated to get on stage or on the streets and express it.

MRR: What do you think of the reverent nature of current punk music in relation to the past? Is punk at this point repetition?
Punk has always been about repetition. Two chords are easy to repeat, the important thing is how do you repeat them.

MRR: What underlies the idea of "Fuck Separation"? Is it based on cross-border, transnational unity?
It works in two ways. First, the fucked-upness of borders and the production of national identities, which often produce racism. Second, the way that we take things for granted on an individual level. For example in punk, we assume that a song has to last three minutes, it has to have a rhythm, it has to be a unity. Often I find that there's a lack of exploration that leads to conservatism. This type of conservatism is the one that leads to accept categorizations and borders. As long as you are somewhere that you are familiar with, you are happy and safe, and you do not want to be bother.

MRR: Is the end of separation inherently anti-capitalist, or does capitalism itself also aspire to the end of national separation?
Capitalism needs to constantly find new ways of producing value; it needs to expand. In this sense, as we have seen in globalization, it does not care about borders. To the point that imported food is much cheaper than locally produced food, then of course you get the food crisis. At the same time it is not enough to combat capitalism in a national scale.

MRR: What about media-based separation (i.e. spectacle)? Does punk overcome that type of separation?
At the very best punk can produce pockets of resistance. DIY is a good example, take whatever you have at hand, misuse it until you feel that you can be yourself without any restrictions. Good examples are self-organized squats, *gaztetxes* (youth centers), zines, or very fucked punk bands that are not reproducing stereotypes.

MRR: What is the motivation behind the *Accumulation* record?
Capitalism works abstracting labor from us, from something very concrete and specific like our abilities to make things, then becomes something so abstract like money. Of course in the process somebody is accumulating money, while others are getting more and more fucked. Instead of accumulation as making money, we used accumulation as a way of making music. In "accumulation" we take something very simple such as one chord, one word and one drum, and we start to accumulate chords, and the tracks together to produce a kind of abstract and desperate music that can make you think about the fuck-up-ness of letting capitalists make profit from you. How much accumulation of frustration do we need to explode? The whole picture in front of us is pretty fucked up. This is not the time to make nice music, but the most desperarte and brutal one.

MRR: Do you think that noisy, chaotic, and otherwise fucked-up music can be integrated into (coopted by) capitalism?
For sure, fucked up music can be recuperated by capitalism! I do not know how to draw a line where capitalism begins and ends. We are born out of capitalism, we are used to it, we are familiar with it, we speak its language, and we are products of capitalism. But the question is whether we can make music that stirs up thinking and reflection, rather than complacency and affirmation.

MRR: Is Billy Bao an attempt to explore the boundaries of musical anti-capitalism?
If that is possible, yes!

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A chat with:

LUK HAAS

TAM '89 Records and Punk Rock World Traveler Extrodinaire

A few months back Luk Haas visited Maximum Rocknroll *for the first time in his long history of writing for the magazine. We were lucky enough to sit him down for an interview.*

MRR: How did you discover punk?

Luk: I think I first listened to punk in high school. I had a bunch of friends who were listening to different kinds of rock stuff that was coming out. Sometimes during our lunch break, we would play records. At some point, someone brought the Sex Pistols LP. That would have been back in 1979 or 1980. It did not impress me very much. At that time, I was listening to a lot of different bizarre kinds of rock music, including metal and prog rock and stuff like this. However, I went to some kind of live, open-air concert, I think it was in 1979. I hitchhiked to a place close to the border of Luxembourg, called Rettel. The Clash were playing that night. Still, I was not a punk at that time. When I went to the concert, the open field, there were a lot of punks. I think it was the first time in my life I ever saw punks. I was kind of scared, because they were wearing swastikas and spitting on each other and fighting. I was like, "uh-oh." I was a kid, like sixteen. And I was on my own. So I was trying to stay away.

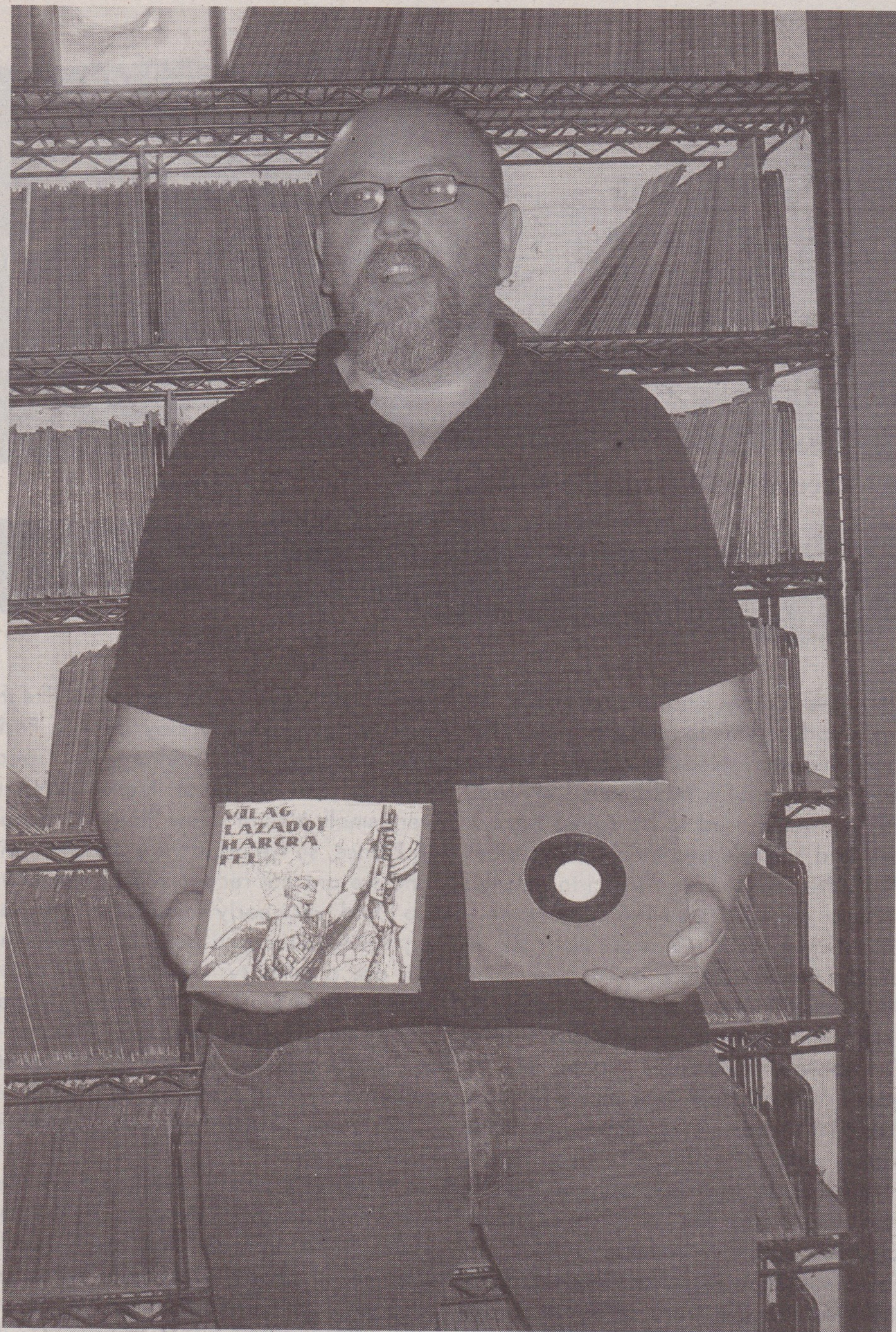
Later on, I went to Poland in 1983, when I was twenty. When I went there, I visited some Polish friends, who introduced me to Polish rock music. It was the explosion of Polish rock music in the early '80s. There were a lot of different styles. It was going from punk to new wave to metal to alternative to any kind of rock music. So they introduced me to all the current Polish bands that were releasing records. Among them was one punk band called Brygada Kryzyz, which used to be called Kryzys. They had just released their famous black LP. My friends told me, "Listen to this, this is Polish punk." I was like, "Hmm, very interesting sound." It was not like rock 'n' roll like the Sex Pistols. It was something else, something out of the ordinary. At some point, there was also some kind of mix between punk and reggae on the record, which I liked very much, because at that time I was already listening to some reggae stuff.

This was the first punk band in Poland. Then there was the coup by General Jaruzelski, and they banned the Solidarity movement. Then it became underground, and most people were arrested. It was then a state of emergency in Poland. When I was there it was still the state of emergency. Then, because this band had been organizing gigs to support the Solidarity movement, they were banned by the authorities. They could not play anymore, and the record was not available. The record was out, and the authorities probably destroyed whatever was left in the shops.

I was following what was going on in Poland, with the worker's movement, the mobilization against the regime. I was very interested in all this kind of political stuff. I had already started to be involved with local minorities' issues, where I'm from. I come from a region where there is a minority language, a German dialect and minority culture, so we are not like the real French guys you may meet in Paris. We have a dual culture—we speak German and we speak French. We are very small, it's just a few thousand people in France, so we are a very small minority and we are not recognized by the State. So I had, very early when I was a teenager, this idealism and political attitude that we are a minority, we should be recognized by the State, etc. I was a conscientious objector at the same time, I refused to go to the military. At that time it was still compulsory, and I refused, so I had to do civil service. I was already very politically active.

So when I was in Poland, I was like, wow this is fantastic, these punks, they are doing good stuff, and they are banned. I was really into it. There was something going on in Eastern Europe, which was very different from what's going on in the West. Rock in the West was music, it's entertainment. In the East, it was political. They were moving forward, they were going to confront the regime. They were going to jail for their ideas. I said, "Wow, this is the stuff." Poland opened my eyes.

When I got back from Poland, I had all these Polish records, including Brygada Kryzyz. I listened to all this Polish stuff. I started to be interested in what's going on in the other countries in the Eastern block. So I started to dig out, to do some research about Hungary, East Germany, Czechoslovakia. I found out that there were quite good rock scenes, but also some punks. I contacted some guys in Paris, Patrice from New Wave Records,



because someone told me, "This New Wave Records in Paris is going to do a Polish punk compilation LP." I was very excited, so I called him, I went to Paris and I met him, and he said it's not true. But someone in Paris was doing a Hungarian punk 7" compilation, the famous *Vilag Lazadoi Harcra Fel*, which is the first vinyl with Hungarian punk. Very revolutionary stuff. Then he told me, if you want to get more information about Polish punk, and punk in general, you should read *Maximum Rocknroll*. That was in 1983.

In the summer of 1983 I was in Poland, in the fall I was in Paris and I met the guy. He was distributing *Maximum Rocknroll*, so I bought a copy. That's the first copy of *MRR* I ever had, from the fall or winter of 1983. I bought this magazine—it was in English. I was like, OK, let's see. There were all these scene reports from Brazil and stuff. I was like, "It's blowing my mind! This is the shit." I subscribed. It was really expensive for me to send the dollars to the US. It was really expensive for Europeans to subscribe to *Maximum Rocknroll* at the time. I had no job, just some small jobs here and there. I was preparing for my civil service entry. Every month I was getting the issues. I was like, wow, fantastic stuff, Hungary, Germany, Brazil, Argentina. I was starting to buy some music. I was still not so much interested in Western punk. But, through *Maximum Rocknroll*, I saw that some of the bands in the West were also political, which was new to me. That made it interesting.

The first US punk record I ever bought was *Let Them Eat Jellybeans*. I bought it in the shops in France. The first French punk record I ever bought was maybe, I'm not sure, it's hard for me to remember, something like Collabos or *Chaos en France*, early French punk. That was less interesting because it was not really political, songs about getting drunk, fucking around, fighting, and being working class. For me, the lyrics were a bit stupid, but the music was good. I was in my 20s, I needed to rebel a little bit. I thought, it's quite good, maybe it's shocking.

Next, I discovered some German punk—Slime. I went to some party in Germany—I was studying in Strasbourg, which is right on the border—where there were a lot of German students, and we were invited to a party. During the party, there were some different kind of young guys, French and German, hippies and punks and whatever, and someone put on Slime. I said, "Wow, what's this"? The music was really good, it reminded me a little bit of Kryzys because it was really good punk, but sometimes a bit reggae. I looked at the cover, and it was all in German. I speak German, so I could read the titles, and it was against the army, the state... It was like, "Yes! This is me. I see myself in this. I'm a conscientious objector, I refuse to go to the army, this is exactly me." It was in a language that was directly speaking to me, because I am from a German minority in France. I was like, these German punks, they are the guys playing this German political punk stuff. That was it, I was a punk. I was a punk without looking like a punk, because at the time I still had a big beard and long hair. I was dressed in old military clothes, more looking like a hippie. I didn't care at all. What I saw in Germany, everybody's mixed. You don't need to look like a punk. You can have long hair, whatever. You are a young guy, you are with your friends, and this is the shit, and that's it. Nobody cares. So I went to some punk gigs, and it was OK. I met some punks, and I liked the guys—they were friendly. I met some skinheads, they were nice guys—most of them, not all of them, some of them (*laughs*). That's it. A bunch of friends, we are having fun, we are making music, going to gigs, this stuff is kind of political and provocative, it absolutely fits me in my life and my ideology and what I want to do. So it was fitting me. It was just the clothes I was looking for.

I was reading *Maximum Rocknroll*, and I'm getting a buzz on because I need more. This is not enough. It's always Poland, Poland, Poland—that's nice, it's great, fantastic bands. I was like, "Nobody's ever talking about Czechoslovakia. What's going on in Czechoslovakia"? I want more, I want more. So in the summer of 1986, I decided to go to Czechoslovakia, and check out if there are punks, and if there is a scene or anything. At the time, I had just bought the cassette by Mykel Board, *World Class Punk*, which had one Czech punk band, and there was one address on it. I thought there must be punk, and I do not understand why there would not be a scene report about Czechoslovakia in *Maximum*, and if nobody's doing it then I am going to do it. So I went, and I had only this address of these guys, the manager of A64, that was the band. The guy was called Petr Zikmunt. I took my visa, I took the train, and I traveled to Prague. I went to the address of this guy and I rung the bell, there was nobody. It was in the neighborhood of the Prague Castle, a very nice neighborhood. I went several times, and at one point the guy came. I said "Are you Petr Zikmunt"? He said, "yes." I told him I got the contact for A64 from this compilation out in the States. He told me A64 split up. I told him still I would be very interested to learn about punk [*in Czechoslovakia*], because I would like to start writing something for *Maximum*. The guy said, "I don't know, I'm not in the scene anymore. I'm managing another band that is kind of avant-garde stuff. They are called Ser Un Peyjalero." He didn't want to have anything to do with punk anymore for some reason. So I decided to find it by myself.

I was in Prague, a town new to me. I did not speak the language. I was hanging around town, looking for any punks. At some point I met a Czech guy, Pavel Veverka, who was a kind of hippie type—the generation of Czech people who were listening to Plastic People of the Universe from the first underground wave of Czech music, like prog rock and avant-garde stuff. The guy said, "Well, I can connect you to some underground musicians, but I don't know abut punk, but I know some guys who might," and so on. So this guy was very friendly, and he connected me to some people of the Jazz Section of the Union of Musicians of Czechoslovakia. At that time, the Jazz Section, *Jazzova Sekce*, was the underground union for dissident musicians in Czechoslovakia. They were being watched by the police. Actually, it was not about jazz, it was about being rebellious. All the avant-garde stuff, all the provocative stuff, and all the really weird musicians were there. So I went to their headquarters, and I got a bunch of information, contacts, and I met some more bands. I found some really interesting avant-garde stuff.

I met Mikolas Chadima, who was one of the first punks in Czechoslovakia. He was playing with Extempore, the band that was making the link between Plastic People and punk. Some of their stuff was like Plastic People, prog rock/avant-garde stuff, and some of their stuff was really punk. He was a very interesting guy. He spoke only German and Czech, so we could speak in German, which was very nice. He gave me some of his cassettes, he introduced me to more musicians, and so on. So I started to have a network of underground and avant-garde musicians—people who were experimenting, but still, I didn't have my punk stuff. It was extremely interesting. It was a rich context and rich discussions, good stuff.

But I kept hanging around in the center of Prague. At some point, I saw some punks in the very center of Prague, Narodni St. It was close to a restaurant that's no more, I don't remember the name, but at that time the restaurant was the headquarters for punk. They met there usually to drink beer. There were some young punks hanging around, with mohawks, red hair, ripped clothes, and stuff, so I went straight to them. I said, "Hey guys, you are the punks I am looking for. They were like, "Ack, sorry, who are you"? They were nice guys. They were nineteen, twenty, and I was like twenty-three, so we were the same generation, there was no gap [*laughs*]. We hung out together, and they said, "We have a band, there are so many bands here," and they gave me all the information as they were very well connected. They were sometimes given a hard time by the police—they were beaten up, and some of them went to jail. They were also kind of self-destructive, and many of them were taking drugs, whatever they could get in the local pharmacies. They would take pills or cough syrup and mix it and shoot it straight in their arms. I had some really crazy weekends with these guys. I spent several days staying with them. Moving from one flat to another, and spending the night there, talking through the night. Many of them did not speak very good English, so we had to use a Czech-English dictionary. One of them spoke a bit of German, so we could communicate. They became my friends. I took a lot of pictures, I brought a lot of cassettes and stuff. When I came back, I had all this material, photos and stuff, and I started writing my first *Maximum Rocknroll* scene report. I wrote, this is the first ever Czechoslovakian scene report in *Maximum*, I hope you will print it. It was printed! Yes!

MRR: I bet we still have the photos.

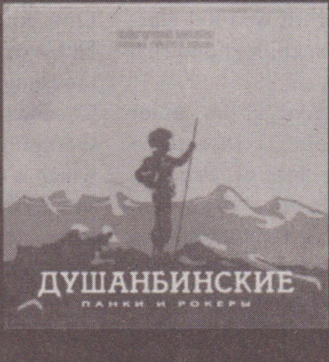
Luk: It was my first ever. I thought, it's done, it's working, I like it, it's great, it's fun, I meet people... I started this underground DIY cassette label, called Ukrutnost Tapes, to release this underground Czech stuff I had brought with me.

MRR: How do you spell that? What does it mean?

Luk: [*Spells it*] It means "atrocity" in Czech. I was releasing all this Czech stuff. I sent cassettes to *Maximum* for review. One cassette reviewed was the FPB live. FPB was one of the great punk bands of the time, from Teplice in the north of Czechoslovakia, on the border with East Germany. They are now Uz Jsme Doma, which is a famous punk-ish, avant-garde-ish band. They play in the States pretty regularly nowadays. They are really punk guys, still punk!

In 1986, I had just finished my civil service, and I started to work in a school. I was planning my next trip. What's next, what's missing in *Maximum Rocknroll*? I was always fascinated by China, so I thought, next year—I could only afford one trip a year—I'll go to China. So, in 1987 I flew to Hong Kong. Out of nothing, I met some bands in Hong Kong, some punk bands like Creeping Jesus,. I met a guy who was a manager for different bands. It was difficult, but somehow I got in touch with this guy, who introduced me to some bands in Hong Kong. I got a few recordings, and I took some pictures. I wrote my Hong Kong scene report for *Maximum Rocknroll* in 1987, the first one ever.

Then I moved on to the People's Republic of China, and that was really crazy. I had no plan. I was in Guangzhou, and I had a huge culture shock, wow. I was not really ready. I had never been in Asia before. Hong Kong was OK, because it is like the West. But being in Guangzhou in 1987...there was not much rock 'n' roll going on in China, and there was absolutely no punk. I ended up playing in a Chinese movie. Someone saw me on the street and came up to me and said, "You're the kind of guy we are looking for." Then I moved to Beijing, and I checked the record shops. I bought a lot of Chinese cassettes. Nothing was looking like rock 'n' roll, but I bought randomly. I took the train through Mongolia and Siberia to Moscow, then the train to Berlin, then back to France. I started listening to all these tapes. It turned out that out of these Chinese tapes was the first rock/pop compilation ever made in China, including one song by Cui Jian, who is the godfather of Chinese rock 'n' roll. '87 was the year he released his one hit song in China, called "Yi Wo Sui Yao," which means "I am nothing. I am worthless." The attitude is there. It became a big hit, because all the young Chinese saw, yes, this guy is telling me something that is touching me. He is saying we are just nothing, and it's true.



موج نوی فارسی
the Persian New Waves

Cui Jian is the godfather of Chinese rock 'n' roll. Before that, he was playing trumpet in a state orchestra. Then he met some foreign students in Beijing—they gave him some rock tapes. He liked them, he got a guitar, and he started to play rock with some guys. He's made many albums. The music is good. It's rock, sometimes with Chinese influences or blues influences. The lyrics are absolutely brilliant. Cui Jian is from an ethnic minority of China. He is an ethnic Korean of China. Thanks to him, there is punk, and there is everything else in China.

At the same time, in the Soviet Union, there is one guy who kind of started a new generation of rock. This guy is Viktor Tsoy. He was the singer of the band Kino. This is the first Soviet rock band that played a punk song on their LP in the Soviet Union. The song was "Mama Anarkhia" ("My Mother Anarchy" in English)—it was released by the State on their first LP. They made it like they are making fun of punks, but actually they mean what they say. They managed to get through the censorship because they said that it's a song against punk. Viktor Tsoy, the leader of Kino, died in the late '80s. The young people all over the former Soviet Union, they really worship him like the godfather of Soviet rock 'n' roll. He was an ethnic Korean in the Soviet Union—a Soviet Korean. These two guys, in the Soviet Union and in China, were both Korean. And the Koreans are very proud of this! The South Koreans, they know about this. There is a connection, when you look at it. It's crazy!

MRR: The outsiders...

Luk: Outsiders were doing it. That was China, my scene report of 1987. It was only Hong Kong, because I found nothing in China. I did some small trips afterwards. I was very fascinated by East Germany, because I was still fascinated by Communist countries. I wanted to check their underground, so in the winter of 1987, I think, I went to East Germany, to Leipzig. I met punks there—L'Attentat, who did an LP later in West Germany. I did the translation of lyrics into French. I smuggled the picture for the cover out of East Germany to West Germany in my luggage. I was not caught, thanks god [*laughs*]. I stayed with the guys for some time. They were good friends, and we had some good times. I did an interview with L'Attentat for *Maximum Rocknroll*. It was my third contribution—a two-page spread.

In 1988, the next summer, I went to Singapore, Malaysia, and Thailand. At that time, 1988, they had one punk band in Singapore. I had written a letter to *Maximum Rocknroll*, saying I was going to Singapore. It got printed, and I got a letter from a Singaporean student in the States who was into punk. He said, "I will be back in Singapore during the summer. I know of one band in Singapore, and if you want...I can introduce you to the guys." I was like, "easy"! I just wrote a letter to *Maximum* and I got my contact in Singapore. There were never any reports on punk in Singapore, so it was completely new. I went there, and the guy met me at the airport. He was a very nice guy, Mike Teo. He was friends with a guy doing a fanzine in Singapore called *Big O*. It's a rock fanzine. They knew most of the bands, and they introduced me to this punk band called Opposition Party. They were real punks, really nice guys. They were starting to play music— they had a very poorly recorded demo, and we did an interview with them. It was my fourth *Maximum* contribution, a two-page spread with Singapore punk band Opposition Party.

Then I moved on to Malaysia. Nobody seemed to know about punk in Kuala Lumpur. In 1988 punk had not yet reached Kuala Lumpur. It was still on the East Coast. The birthplace of punk in Malaysia is the Terengganu state. There, it was a bunch of kids in high school, and a guy named Joe Kidd, who is a very good friend of mine now. They got to listen to punk through some British expatriates who were working the region in some kind of mines. Because of this British community, the local shops were carrying up-to-date British music. Somehow the local kids also got access to this, through the shop, and they formed a kind of punk club, exchanging tapes and writing about punk. Later on, some of them would move to Kuala Lumpur, the capital, and start the punk scene there. I was there too early, there was nothing.

Then I went on to Thailand. When I was in Thailand, there seemed to be nothing, until I came across some really weird looking guys on the street. They had dreadlocks and a lot of jewelry and stuff. I was asking, "...Do you know any punks"? And they said "Yes, we know some punks. You can meet them at the weekend market in Chatuchak, in Bangkok." So I went there, and there were some punks, with mohawks and tattoos and everything. And that was Dok Mohok. I met with them, hung out, we did a few things together. We talked a lot. They didn't seem much aware of what is punk music, but they didn't really speak English, mostly Thai, and I don't really speak Thai. So it was lots of smiling and back-patting and stuff. They were nice guys. When I came back, I sent in the Opposition Party interview and the

Thailand scene report, the first ever. I think it even went on the cover, 'cause of the crazy photos of the Thai punks, with the huge Mohawks and stuff.

'89, I went to the Indian Ocean, with Mauritius and the Reunion Island. I met some punks in those places. In the Reunion Island they even had bands, one punk band called Acid. I found them by searching very hard. They were high school kids and it was the summer holidays, so the high schools were closed. I was asking around saying, "Has anybody ever heard about punks here"? Someone told me, "Yes, I saw an article in the daily newspaper of the Reunion Island Communist Party." There had been one article about the punks. So I called the Communist Party newspaper, and asked to speak with the journalist who wrote this article. They said, "No, we can't tell you, it's confidential."

Someone told me it was written that it was kids from such-and-such high school, so I decided to check the high school. It was closed for the summer, but the door was open, so I went inside. In one office, someone was working, sorting out the papers of the final exams. I said, "Excuse me, there was an article about punks in the Communist newspaper, and it seems the guys were studying in this high school. Could you help me to get in touch with them"? The secretary told me, "Yes, they were students here, but they've moved on. I don't know if I can give you their address... Maybe they would not like it, or their parents maybe would not like it." But somehow, she gave me their name and address. So I went to the phone book, found some phone number and called. Of course, they were high school kids, so I got the parents. I said, "Can I speak to..." The parents said, "Who are you"? I said, "I'm doing a report about punks." So I got to talk with them. The kids were kind of shocked that I had done this kind of investigation!

We met up, and it was cool. We went to the rehearsal place, and I recorded some of their music on my tape recorder, which later I released on my *Last Call for the Lost Scenes* compilation, Volume 1. That was it, I was hanging out with the punks of the Reunion Island! This is a French overseas territory, a tropical island full of volcanoes. In the capital city, there is this road along the seaside, with all the palm trees and so on, and these guys had spray painted all the palm trees with anarchy symbols!

Then I went to Mauritius. I met two punks there, but there were no bands, just some guys. But still I wrote a report about this, an Indian Ocean scene report. I liked to see my stuff printed, and other people seemed to like it too. *Maximum* seemed happy to print it.

1990, I went back to Thailand and I went to Laos. In Thailand I met with Dok Mohok again. In between he had gotten in an accident, and he was blind. [*Dok worked as an extra in movies, but a light exploded and blinded him, leaving him with no way to earn an income—ed.*] We started to raise money for him. We did a compilation with Katz Seki in Los Angeles from Gothic Gospel Records. It's called *Don't Forget the Punks of Bangkok*. We made some money with it, and I brought it to him in Bangkok.

In Laos, I couldn't find anything, just some metal guys. '91, I went to the Philippines. I had some contacts, because there was already some information in *Maximum*. I did quite a lot of interviews. I interviewed the Philippine Violators, and the former boss of Twisted Red Cross tapes, Tommy Tanchanco. Then I went to Taiwan. There I was very lucky, I met the vocalist of the first ever punk band in Taiwan, Double X. They made one album, on cassette. I got this album. The guy's name is Sissey Chao. This is kind of his English name, his real Chinese name is Zhao Yi Er. I don't remember how I met him. It was difficult, because in Taiwan there were not many punks at the time. He had already moved on from Double X. He was doing solo stuff, and it is kind of interesting—it had some punk-ish stuff, not all of it. I went to some rock bar, where they had live bands, and I met another punk band called Dragon Head. I hung out a bit with them, and then I did the first Taiwan scene report, in '91. After Taiwan, I went to Hong Kong. In Hong Kong, I met with Blackbird, this anarchist punk underground band. Punk, funk, blues—they play everything, but they are really political guys, anarchists. They are nice, nice people. I met the vocalist and guitarist, Guo, and I met Casi, his wife, the bass and violin player. I did a very long interview with Blackbird.

MRR: When you featured these scenes and bands in *Maximum*, was there any kind of response from the countries that you were covering? Did it generate anything?

Luk: Not much. At that time, I was always taking copies of *Maximum* with me. I was giving them to people in the hope that they would be interested to write and contribute, like planting the seed, you know? Giving out tapes and *Maximum*, making interviews, getting the guys interested, excited... I think that most of the time, it went to nothing. There was once, a response about my Hong Kong scene report. Someone from Hong Kong complained about my scene report, saying, "What is this bullshit? These bands he is talking about, everybody knows they are poseurs. They are not the real punks..." [*everyone laughs*] The first ever letter to *Maximum* from Hong Kong was a complaint letter! I thought, why didn't this guy write the scene report instead of complaining?

MRR: Out of everywhere that you've been to, what was the most surprising place that you found a punk scene or punks?

Luk: Maybe Thailand in the beginning, but it was not really a scene. It was a few punks that really didn't know much about punk. It was the attitude, and the image. I have a lot of respect for all the punks I met in the Eastern Block countries—Czechoslovakia, East Germany. It was great people, great music, great times. Just to come back to what you were asking before, much later, many years later, new scenes would appear, and those people would contribute sometimes to *Maximum*, but it wasn't connected to what I did. In Czechoslovakia, one of my friends that I met in 1986—Petr Bergman, who was playing in the band called Pivny Mozoly—at that time he did not speak English. A couple of years later, he spoke perfect English, and he would send stuff to *Maximum*. To this day, he's an activist of the scene. He went from street punk, doing drugs with his friends, to an activist of the scene. He's on his second or third project. He created a kind of alternative cultural center in the middle of Prague, with music, theater, workshops, women's groups, and a lot of stuff. Then it was destroyed by the city, to make a parking lot. He's now running an alternative cultural center somewhere in the countryside, on the border with Poland. He doesn't have blue hair anymore. Last time I saw him he had dreadlocks, and a kind of skirt.

MRR: Is it strange going back to countries like Czechoslovakia, where there was such oppression?

Luk: When I go back nowadays, it's like going somewhere in Western Europe. I have all these bad memories, from the time I spent there, with punks, hiding from the police. Going to flats far away in the suburbs...

MRR: A secret society.

Luk: Yes. It's weird. All the musicians I met, all these underground guys were struggling, they went to jail. Now you can find their CDs everywhere. I met a guy a few years later, Mikolas Chadima, formerly of Extempore, who is now with MCH Band. He has done a lot of new albums, and he has released his old stuff on CD, which was never released before. When I met him some years ago, after the fall of communism, he said, "It's weird. We used to struggle in the underground. We used to be at the control of the State, of the police, all the time. We were threatened,"—he had a police car in front of his house. "When we did organize underground gigs, just by word of mouth, hundreds of people would come. Some from far away in the countryside. Now, everything is possible...and nobody's coming to gigs. Everybody's listening to American music. The CDs are not selling. What's the point? We were doing all this stuff under communism, and now that everything's possible, everything's dead."

MRR: They have to figure out a new way to resist *that*.

[*Talk about how there is also a generation gap between older folks and the kids coming up today who want to hear something that's not reminiscent of the old times. Also how hip-hop is popular with kids in part because it's more accessible—you don't need instruments.*]

Luk: In the new scenes, where punk is appearing, like Laos, it seems like all the young kids are into it. If punk is the old stuff here, go to Laos, where it's new.

MRR: What's the story with that Cambodian band you played on the radio show?

Luk: This band, Vealsre, is made up of two Cambodians and two French guys. They don't exist anymore. The French guys were working as French teachers, I think, in the country. The Cambodians were guys...connected somehow to the French community. They decided to do some rock in Khmer, something which was never made before, at least since the mid '70s. From the '60s to the '70s, they had rock in Cambodia, before the Khmer Rouge took power. Then, everybody was killed. Now they are re-starting the scene. So Vealsre does not exist anymore, but they did two CDs. It's not straight punk. The song I played is really punk, but the rest is a mix of different styles of rock. They went on to do another band called Teuk Mate, with one CD. That band split, and now they are called Thom Thom. Thom Thom is two Cambodians—one girl playing bass and one guy playing guitar and singing—and one French guy playing the drums. Thom Thom has a very interesting website you can check out. They say they are a Cambodian garage band. Vealsre was a little bit soft, now they want to do something really [*makes noise, indicating aggression, I guess-ed.*] They are touring like hell in the Cambodia. They go to the countryside, where nobody had ever heard of rock 'n' roll, and they jam for the people in the villages. It seems like Cambodians like it, because it's really noisy and there's rhythm. Somehow, they are starting some kind of scene. It's too early to tell. They are one of the only bands doing this kind of stuff.

Last year, when I was in Phnom Penh, I heard about another Cambodian band called Substudents, that would be pop-punkish. I didn't manage to find them. The people who told me about them weren't able to put me in touch with them. I met some American punks in Phnom Penh, expatriate punks. One guy was doing a band called Betty Ford and the GT Falcons. It was an American punk band in Cambodia. They played for one or two years, then they split up because some guys moved on. They played regularly in some bars in Phnom Penh, including the bar called Zeppelin. This is the rock bar of Phnom Penh, it's very small. This bar was opened by a Taiwanese guy married to a Cambodian woman. He's a rock fan, and he moved to Cambodia because it's cheaper to live and do a small business. He opened the bar, and he brought his record collection with him. So in the bar there is a wall of vinyl. The guy DJs every night. He's into '60s and '70s rock, mainstream stuff, but he lets the bands play his bar whenever they want. So that's the place where the punks play. American punks, and maybe Substudents, have played there, and Rambo played there when they did their tour of Southeast Asia. Vealsre, Teuk Mate, and Thom Thom are not connected to this scene. They are more connected to the French community. They should meet, though. They should work together.

MRR: Do they know about each other?

Luk: I think so. The American guy from Betty Ford and the GT Falcons told me he knows of them, but not much about them. When Thom Thom plays in Phnom Penh, they play at the French Cultural Center. Who goes to the French Cultural Center? The Americans won't go. It's a small country, it's a small scene, but people are still split.

MRR: So you started out being politically motivated, and leaning towards being an activist.

Luk: I was a member of Greenpeace at the time, and I was a member of Amnesty International. I was a conscientious objector, and I was a militant for my culture and language. I was very much anti-state. I refused to go to the army, because at that time didn't recognize the French state. They don't recognize me, so I don't recognize them! It was really politically motivated, which I could not tell them, of course! If I were to tell them, "I don't recognize your state, keep it for yourself," they would have sent me to jail. I was not that crazy!

MRR: Do you think that affected what you do for a living?

Luk: Yes, I think so. I never had a job, a real job, until now. So I was doing odd jobs, working student jobs.

[*Talking about how he got his current job*]

I was traveling in Vietnam, and some guys I met told me they would probably hire me. I was reaching the end of my situation—I couldn't get the dole anymore. I was tiring of looking for money, doing moving jobs... After a couple of months, I applied. I was hired like this [*snaps*]! So I've been doing this for twelve years. I still have thirteen years to go before I retire!

MRR: How has your work affected your worldview?

Luk: It's difficult to say. I'm probably more sensitive about a lot of stuff. Everybody knows a lot of shit is going on in the world. When you are dealing with this shit from day to day, and it's part of your job to try and clean up a bit of this shit...I'm more pessimistic. I don't believe too much in human beings, when you see what they can do to each other. That's awful, isn't it? It's a bit difficult.

MRR: I can't imagine some of the stuff you were saying, about the situation in Africa.

Luk: This work makes sense for me, because I feel useful. In my life, I never wanted to work for a boss. If the purpose of the job is to make money, I find that very stupid. I don't want to waste my life helping someone to make money. I wanted to do something with a purpose... It's like a reality check. You are always in the middle of action, in the middle of conflict, big events happening. Sometimes you can make a difference, not always. You can really help people to get on with their lives.

Sometimes it's very basic. You are in Uganda, and there is a conflict going on, and the rebels just attacked some refugee camp. You get a call saying there is a lot of wounded, and nobody dares to bring them to a hospital. It's twenty kilometers, but it's too dangerous, because the rebels might still be around. They call us, we take the car, and we go. We take the stretchers, pick up the wounded, and bring them to the hospital. Maybe we save some lives. Maybe it's a drop in the ocean. But it's better than nothing, I think. In this specific case of picking up the wounded, it feels like a drop in the ocean.

In other cases, like in these programs, for the displaced, we distributed seeds and tools. The timing was so they can plant the seeds and be self-sustainable. It worked, which was wonderful. In the bush land of north Uganda, there is not much growing, and the people live in refugee camps because they are afraid of the attacks by the rebels—people had been becoming dependent on us. They were waiting for food to be distributed. In an emergency situation, there is no choice. You give them food until you find another way. It's not good for anybody to get assisted. If the people are sitting all day long in the refugee camps, waiting for food and doing nothing, they feel like shit. If you give seeds and tools, and it's well-planned and it works, you see the cornfields growing up like crazy because it's raining like hell and the soil is good. These people, all of them are farmers. What they know to do is work in the fields and grow the food. You help them regain their dignity, it's fantastic. The people are so happy. They prefer this to being given the food.

MRR: How do you handle situations where you need to negotiate between different groups? Especially when you're dealing with rebel organizations that don't necessarily have the same world or moral views as you do?

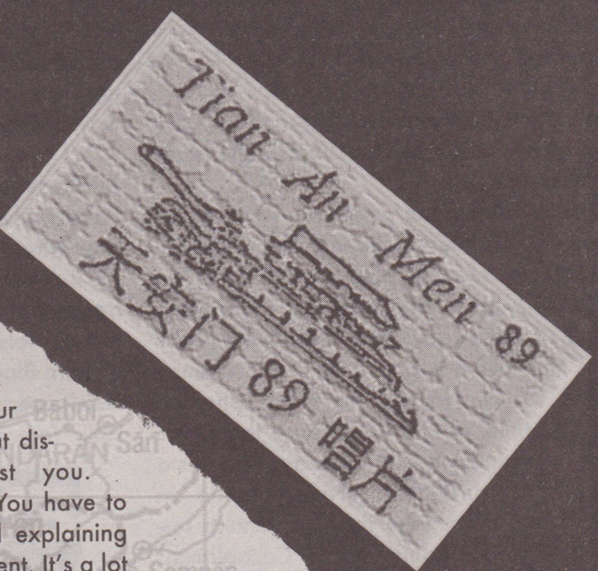
Luk: You always have to go back to the basics. You have to explain, we are human beings, you are human beings, some of the people around here are suffering, so it would be good if we could alleviate a little bit of suffering. Sometimes it works, people will say, "Fine, you can assist these guys, as long as you do your work and nothing else." Many times, people in armed groups, or the army, they are suspicious of foreigners. They think maybe you have a double agenda, you are here for spying. Most of the time, it's OK. If you do your work correctly, openly, without discrimination, they will trust you. Sometimes it does not work. You have to keep on meeting people and explaining and trying to get their agreement. It's a lot of networking.

MRR: It's funny—it's exactly what you were saying about finding punks.

Luk: Yeah, except instead of talking to punks, street kids, or rock musicians, you talk to officers of the army, guerilla combattants, ministers of the government. From being a punk reporter, I became a humanitarian worker. Sometimes, I have to wear a suit and tie because I have an appointment with the Prime Minister's office. You have to play the game, otherwise you will not achieve anything. I never wore a tie before.

MRR: One thing that we talked about before...the fact that when you're dealing with situations where extreme violence and degradation of humanity is a daily reality for a lot of people, figuring out how to keep your dignity is incredibly difficult. As a punk, when you see records that have images from wars...

Luk: When you work in a war situation, and you're dealing with people who have lost everything, the most important thing they want to gain back is their dignity. The basic line is, everybody has a right to be respected. So when I see a punk record with images of dead bodies, which is just there for the shock value, or because it's trendy and punk to put this stuff on covers, I find it very stupid. This is not respecting the dignity of the people who are featured on the records. For me, this is against punk. It's been done, redone, and done again. People don't even notice it anymore. So it's maybe a kind of race to be the most shocking, gross, and disgusting. People should get a life, and try to be a little bit creative and artistic. After all these years and experiences, I cannot accept this. Punk supposedly had a purpose and a kind of meaning, an attitude that should be progressive and open-minded and respectful... If they use this kind of imagery for their covers, it's not.



MRR: It's like we were talking about...the reporter in South Africa, who was filming the fleeing immigrants. That situation is really sad, in a country that is one of the wealthiest in Africa. Most of the surrounding countries have been exploited by bad leadership and lack of infrastructure, so people are starving, and they can get work in South Africa. To film somebody who is dying as the result of an anti-immigration attack, although it's not in the context of punk, it's similar...

Luk: It's the exploitation of human suffering. Sometimes the journalist will think, "OK, thanks to my pictures, people will know what's going on." You can't shoot pictures of the dying and wounded and sell it to TV to show all over the world. What's the point? You can do your job without going that far. As a human being, if you see someone in this situation, your first reflex should be to drop the camera and help them.

MRR: Apart from America, where you are visiting now for the first time, where was the last place that you traveled and ran into punks?

Luk: I guess it was Tajikistan, or Uzbekistan. I was based in Tajikistan, but went many times to Uzbekistan and met punks there. No, actually, it was Cambodia last year.

MRR: You were talking about the Moroccan punk scene. What is the story with that?

Luk: The Moroccan punk scene I stumbled upon on the internet, even though I did the Moroccan scene report back in 1991. In 1991, I went to Morocco and I met some kind of metal guys, but there was really not much of a scene. I still wrote a small thing for *Maximum*. I'm a bit ashamed when I think of it now, because there was not much substance. Nowadays, there is a big rock and underground scene in Morocco. Every year they organize a festival, called L'Boulevard in Casablanca. It's usually around June, an open-air show. There are always several stages. One is for the local bands, and one is for foreign bands. Usually there is a competition for new bands. There is some kind of vote, who is the Moroccan band of the year. Last year, this punk band from Rabat won. They are called Zlak Wella Mout, which means Skate or Die. Sometimes they just use ZWM. You can find a lot of their stuff on the 'net, even videos. They are on MySpace. There are more bands—one band called Anarchy in Rabat, they are more like grunge stuff. There is a very good band called Hoba Hoba Spirit, which is a kind of ska-rock-punk band. They have already three albums. The latest one is available on their website to download for free. Morocco is witnessing an explosion of underground bands.

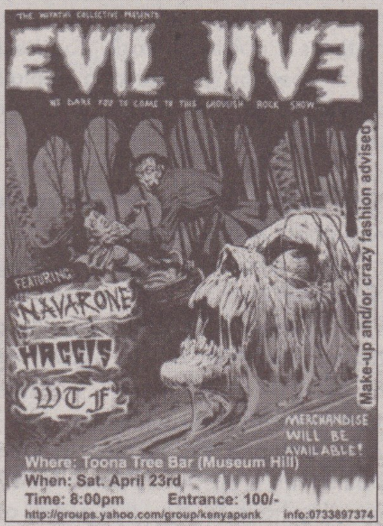
MRR: Is it kind of a mix of North African music and Western music?

Luk: Not so much with punk. With the other styles...there is a mix of reggae and gnawa [*tradition Moroccan music*]. You can find a lot of bands mixing this stuff. One is very good, called Amarg Fusion. Some of this stuff is beautiful music, but it's not punk. They are experimenting, and there are very rich musical traditions. I think Morocco has a bright future in terms of music.

MRR: I have this whole thing of punk being an idea, feeling, and a spirit, rather than a set sound, necessarily.

Luk: This is true, and it's proven by history. If you listen to the early compilations of punk, there was not one sound. Even the early-'80s stuff, you listen to *Let Them Eat Jellybeans*, and so on, there is a lot of different styles. Punk has always been something original and creative, and going against the trends. This is the way my compilations are, different styles. I don't want to have everyone sounding like Green Day or Black Flag. What's the point?

MRR: What you were saying about the Eastern Block punks made me think about how what they were doing was what people in the '60s wanted to do. All those rock bands that had songs about revolution, but just did lots of cocaine and groupies. The Eastern Block punks are actually living this resistance.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Luk: You should look at classical punk bands in Russia. For example. Grazhdanskaya Oborona, whose singer Yegor Letov died about three months ago, they were the real revolutionaries in music in the Soviet Union. They started in the mid '80s in Siberia. Yegor was from Omsk. He recorded about thirty or forty albums in his home, with his friends. Everything was completely underground, clandestine, DIY. They duplicated some cassettes. They had their own style. Really good lyrics, in Russian, fantastic lyrics. It's very Russian, it's inspired by the history of Russia. Mayakovski, for example, is a reference for many of the punks in Russia. They are anarchist. These bands are not known by most people in the West. I think Grazhdanskaya Oborona played in San Francisco. On their latest album, the band is featured on the corner of Haight and Ashbury. I think they played here for the Russian community only...I guess the punk scene missed it completely. That's the Russian legend of punk. They played here, and probably nobody knows.

MRR: What you were saying about *Maximum* covering the Polish scene, and how you're "Oh, the Polish scene," [*said reverently*]. When Armia came to the US and played in Brooklyn, people from here went, and they said everyone at the show was Polish. People knew about the Polish band, but nobody knew about the Russian band.

Luk: Somehow, I get this feeling that *Maximum* is getting cut off from a lot of stuff going on in the world. It used to be more spread, and now it seems to be reduced a little bit, to a kind of niche, no? Europe, US, a bit of South America sometimes, Southeast Asia sometimes, and Japan. The rest of the world is moving on! They are creating thousands of punk records, which is fantastic. There is no connection.

MRR: The idea of *Maximum*, it does move and shift with whoever is in charge, but we only collect records, we're a print magazine. It's a different world from when the magazine started. The internet has opened up the world to ideas. People can learn about human rights abuses in five seconds, instead of five weeks.

Luk: For sharing information, you can get anything in a few seconds. That's fantastic; that's probably why you have punk in Iran and places like this—because of the 'net.

MRR: Maximum does serve a purpose, but it doesn't quite serve the same purpose.

Luk: Somehow, it almost went from global to local.

MRR: Well, people in Cambodia don't need *Maximum* to validate their resistance.

Luk: They don't need it, and they can't afford it. Print is too expensive, and to ship it to Cambodia, forget it.

MRR: We ship to a lot of Southeast Asian countries, but one problem we have is that customs seizes the magazines, so people don't get them. There are a few countries, like Malaysia is really hard to get the magazines into.

Luk: After the cover price, plus the shipping cost, it's still quite expensive for many countries where the people are not wealthy. Even for me, in the early '80s, it was really hard to spend that much money on my subscription. I did it because I needed it! In many countries, people cannot afford it, but they can stay on the 'net for a dollar an hour.

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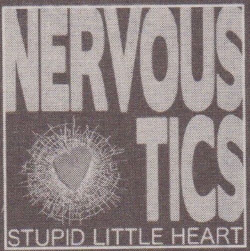

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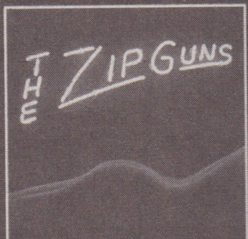

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THE DIODES

Here is the continuation of the conversation of the four individuals that started the Toronto punk scene from ground zero, the Diodes. Part 1 appears in issue #306. Interview conducted by Greg Dick. All photos by Ralph Alfonso.

MRR: John, is it true that you played drums on the single "Shoe Shine Boy/Killer Bees"?
John H: No. I don't think I did. I think it was Linda Lee. I was around then, but, no, I think it was Linda. I played drums on the B Girls single and I played lead guitar.

MRR: "On the Beach." Now, the Diodes, once they were finished with the 15 Duncan Street for rehearsing and your club, where did you practice after that?
Paul: The Crash 'n' Burn closed on the 6th of August, 1977. The following week I was riding my bicycle by Toronto City Hall and I heard this band play and went over to where this band was playing and I started talking to this guy and there was a band on and he said "What do you think of this band?" and I said "I think they are shit," basically. And they were. And he said, "Oh, I manage them" and I said, "Well, I'm sorry for you." Just giving it back to him. And it was a band called Zon, and Zon were signed to CBS and were a rock band, and basically, he said, "Well, if you're so good, give me your demo." So I did, and we got a call. Ian and I went down there. We told them we were from the Diodes. At that point there had been an article in the *Globe and Mail* that said, "Will the Diodes steal the Moxy's audience?" And there was a band called Moxy. I have no idea what this band sounded like.ß

MRR: I think they were like Led Zeppelin or Rush.
Paul: They had seen this article. They said "Come and bring us your demo tape," and Ian and I went down there and played the demo tape for them. They said "We can get you a record deal." Seriously, this was August 6th, and on August 8th this took place where Ian and I played the tape for them. On August 12th CBS said they were interested in signing the Diodes. We went in and recorded the Diodes album by the end of the summer and it was out by the end of September. So that's how quickly it happened.
John H: it was a whirlwind. It was really fast.
Paul: That album was released, pressed, artwork done, and it was out by the middle of September.
John H: They had the tiger by the tail.
Paul: It is a crazy story, but it is the absolute gospel truth. This actually happened. The weird thing is the Crash 'n' Burn closed on the 6th of August with the Dead Boys, the Diodes supported the Dead Boys, and by the middle of September we had an album pressed. We had gone to the studio and recorded it and I think it was pressed in October.
John H: I think our album was out when the Sex Pistols.
Paul: Ours came out before the Sex Pistols first album.
Ian: Yes, it did.

MRR: Would this have been the time when the girls tried to tear your clothes off and get your autograph in front of CBS executives?
Paul: I can't even remember that. It could be a complete myth.

MRR: It's actually in your CD booklet.
John H: We'll have to ask Ralph about that.
Ralph: You told me the story about how you were at Nathan Philip Square and you are standing there while this guy was talking to you and these two girls came up and said "Oh, you're Paul from the Diodes," and that impressed them.
Paul: No, it's true. I remember. People I had never seen, but again we were starting to get our name around in the press and these guys saw these girls come up to me and be very friendly.
Ralph: They didn't tear your clothes off?
Paul: No, they didn't tear my clothes off.
Ralph: They just said hi and stuff.
Paul: It was like, "Wow. You're in the Diodes."

MRR: And there were executives there and possibly it might have inspired them to sign you.
Ian: It was an influence or a confirmation.
Paul: This really got us attention because I think the entire Toronto music machine was running shitlessly scared. They were really running scared that punk was gonna come in and everybody was going to be made redundant. All the labels were scared.
John C: We had a fair bit of press back then.
John H: We had a ton of press.

John C: Mostly in America. And actually a fair bit in England with the Moxy versus the Diodes thing, and so on and so forth.
John H: Front-page article in the *Globe* all the time. I used to wake up every morning and read about myself in the paper.
John C: So it's not surprising that the girls came up to Paul, because by that point we had press photos. We had the stuff that was out there. We were in *Rock Scene Magazine*. We were in *Creem*.
Ian: *Trouser Press*. I think Ralph being a journalist by trade understood how to get press.
John C: Because it was easy to think we were the secret because we had this thing in the basement, but in fact it was quite wide ranging.

MRR: The song "China Doll" was originally titled "Jerry Hall," why did you change it?
John C: We were requested to. Actually, it wasn't so much of a request. Our producer looked at the thing and listened to the recording of it, I guess we had the initial recording of it somewhere. It's probably erased but there was a recording that said "Jerry Hall" and he goes, "What the hell is this about?" "It's about Jerry Hall." He goes, "Who's Jerry Hall?" and we go "She's this really famous model." At this point she was the most famous model in the world and he didn't know who she was, but because he didn't know who she was he thought this was quirky in some sort of way.
Ian: We should have stood our ground.
John H: We'll change it to Paris Hilton.

MRR: You guys should re-record it and release it as a single.
John C: Yeah, well, the original lyrics were pretty close. There was stuff about Andy Warhol which I can't remember if it's out or in.
Paul: Out.
John C: There was stuff about runway girl dead of nights but that was in the original lyrics. Cheekbone playing.
Ian: Yeah but if we get a release in China this could be good in the long run.
John C: If you look at the lyrics it says something about "Asian girl blah blah…" changed lyrics.

MRR: Describe your inspiration behind recording Paul Simon's "Red Rubber Ball," a song he wrote for The Cyrkle.
Paul: When I was 8 years old my parents took me to see the Beatles and the opening act was The Cyrkle and they did "Red Rubber Ball" and it is one of my favorite songs. It was something I knew all the words to so I felt that would be a good thing for the Diodes to do. John and Ian had never heard the song so I sang it to them and they created whatever "Red Rubber Ball" is about for the Diodes from my singing it to them because we didn't have a recorded version of it.
Ian: But Paul Simon, at the time, is coming out and saying this punk rock thing.
Paul: We found later out that Paul Simon had written it and Paul Simon came out and said he hated punk rock, and that it was just the scum of the earth.
Ian: And a transitory thing.
Paul: Exactly. So it was appropriate that Paul Simon wrote our first single.
John C: As an addendum, I never actually heard the original record until sometime in the last ten years with searching for downloads, it came up. One of the first things I did was search for "Red Rubber Ball." I got it down and I listened to it and went "Oh my god."
Paul: What a piece of shit.
John H: What did I do? The way we play it, the last chord is actually a mistake, but it sounded so good that we kept it. It was supposed to end on a minor and we played a major.
John C: It's supposed to play an E and Ian played a G.
Ian: My fingers didn't make it all the way down the neck.
Paul: I think we changed the song and we changed the melody, so, therefore, if we changed the lyrics slightly we'd have written that song because it really has almost nothing to do with the original.
John H: Well, if your listening to the melody line I think Bach wrote it, originally. I'm sure Paul Simon learned it in his piano lessons in grade six or something.
Paul: Maybe it was the first song he ever wrote.
John H: But if you look at the line it is very Bach-ian, in its melodic structure.
Paul: I think the reason that was released as our first single really had little to do with us. I think it had a lot to do with the Canadian music industry and the way people thought of things. They thought nobody has heard of the Diodes, so, of course we couldn't possibly think of releasing one of our own songs. We'll have to release a cover version, which was typical of the Canadian music industry. "Red Rubber Ball" hit the right note for the music industry and they decided to release it.
John C: In fact, there are two cover versions on the album "The Shape of Things to Come," which is a funny record because at the time it seemed like an incredibly obscure cover to do, you know, "Wild in the Streets" with Max Frost And The Troopers, but in actuality loads of people have covered it independently, all thinking it was obscure. You know Slade did it on their first album. We discovered that after we recorded ours. We were literally around at someone's place and he pulled out a SLADE album and we were like 'I don't believe this'. Later on the RAMONES did it.
Paul: Did they? Well they copied us on that. Come on John we were doing it live. I had no idea the

RAMONES did that.
John C: Well I don't think they were paying attention either to the time of day.
Paul: I think a lot of people know that "Hey Little Girl" is a typical thing. You know the DEAD BOYS did it.
John C: The SYNDICATE OF SOUND.

MRR: I remember Freddie Pompeii was in that band.
John H: Syndicate Of Sound? No he was in a band that had a single out called "The Bubble," and he played it for me once, it's quite good. If you could ever get a copy of "The Bubble" single that would be pretty obscure.
John C: Not Bubble Puppy.

MRR: That's the French band with Plastic Bertrand? No, wait, that's Hubble Bubble, actually.
John H: No, it was a band out of Philadelphia and they had a minor single way-back-when and they were pretty good.
John C: I remember and this did go around at that time. "The Bubble" and Bubble Puppy, that's a great question when asking the temperature. I do remember the story about Freddie Pompeii being in the Syndicate Of Sound.
Paul: But also the Barracudas covered that song "Hey Little Girl." A lot of people did it. The Viletones did it.

MRR: I'm not sure if they did that one. The Diodes wrote about having fun as opposed to something political. Paul you said, "The Sex Pistols are purveyors of half-baked political stance and armchair socialism." Did you feel the same way about The Clash, who were also political?
Paul: Well, The Clash were at least good. Whatever they did, they kind of brought it out in the right ways. I'm actually quite a political person, though I can easily separate my politics from being in a band and I've never pushed my politics on people. I don't know if I have answered any questions here.
Ian: We were political, there is no doubt about it.

MRR: In the CD booklet there is a photo of you Paul, and Topper Headon of The Clash. Where was that photo taken?
Paul: It was taken in London in 1978 by David Buckley of The Barracudas. We too were signed to CBS, by the way.

MRR: Who also had The Vibrators.
Paul: Basically, what happened was we went into London to do an Epic release for "Tired of Waking Up Tired" as a single domestically, so we went over to promote it and David Buckley came over with me and never left. We got to meet The Clash, I got to meet Paul Simonon, I got to meet Topper, I got to meet the guys in The Only Ones, I got to meet The Vibrators, I got to meet John Cooper Clarke…all the people that were signed to CBS.

MRR: What inspired you to write "Tennis Again"?
Paul: I think that was more of a personal thing—in some ways growing up in the suburbs—it was my own personal statement.
Ian: Paul had an acute sense of class difference and understood what privilege was and what working people were. He brought a lot of that into the band; understanding what the haves and the have-nots were about. It was kind of a pastiche of somebody of wealth but he had a good idea of what was going on in that area.

MRR: Television influenced your song writing as well. Tell me about "Child Star."
Paul: That was written about an actress who was in a sitcom when I grew up. The perfect-family-type sitcom and the girl grew up to become a heroin addict or just a completely out-of-control teenager and she died of a drug overdose. It was that summer, the summer of '78.
John C: It was a *National Enquirer* thing wasn't it?
Paul: Yeah, it was a big *National Enquirer* story. That influenced me to write that song.
John C: It is a statement on tabloid press.

MRR: I am surprised that CBS rejected John Hamilton's song "Burn Down Your Daddy's House"—they deemed it offensive. Wasn't that supposed to be what punk was? To be a little bit offensive?
John C: I deemed them stupid and John deemed them…
John H: Well, the funny thing about that song is that if you listen to the lyrics, it's not really supporting the character that has burned down daddy's house. It says he is a foolish fellow. He's going to spend his life in prison, but I don't think they ever got further than the title of the song and realized it was written in an ironic vein. If they had looked at it closely they would have seen it supporting the value that they believed in but they were put off by the initial title.

MRR: The Diodes debut was released on 8-track. I guess you were on the tail end of that time in music. Do any of you guys have an 8-track release?
Ian: I have a copy of the 8-track.

MRR: I guess when it changed tracks it didn't go into the middle of any songs like it would on a Yes 8-track.
Ian: I don't have a player, so I can't play it, but I have a copy.
John C: I have the cassette, but I don't have the 8-track.
Ian: I think you gave it to me.

MRR: Was WTBS FM in Boston, the first place that The Diodes received radio exposure?
John C: It was an Oedipus (WTBS DJ) thing.
Paul: You mean in the States?

MRR: Just anywhere, because you had a strong connection to Boston, Paul, and I was wondering if you had gotten it out on the radio before Toronto?
Paul: Well, again, that demo tape that I told you about before that we recorded at OCA, I brought that to Boston and I met this DJ called Oedipus, who was at that station, which was a college radio station at MIT, I think, and through David Buckley, he said, "Oh why don't you come down and play it on my show?" So we put this on and he did an interview with me. It was a completely random thing. Then a year later, when the Diodes CBS album came out, he championed us and played it. We did a radio interview like this.
Ralph: When The Diodes toured the States it was the blizzard of '78.
John H: Nine-foot snow drifts and armed guards guarding Boston.
Ralph: We toured the eastern states but it turns out that as the tour started, it ran into the worst blizzard of all time. By the time we got to Boston there was a martial-law curfew going on so nobody was allowed to drive a car into downtown and we ended up staying at the house of the girls who printed the *Boston Groupie News* and while we were there, we had to take taxis to the club, The Rat, but I remember that when we were there, The Diodes went on WTBS. Oedipus was still there and we did an interview. Oedipus now is a mega-huge program director.
John H: He was incredibly supportive.
Paul: He then became programming director for WBCN, which was Boston's biggest radio station. He is actually personally responsible for breaking The Cars in America, but also The Police in America.
Ralph: I was going to add too that "Burn Down Your Daddy's House," that was when The Diodes were no longer on CBS. What happened was in between the first and second album there was an album called *Permanent Wave*, that Epic Records US put out, because they felt so bad that they weren't releasing any of this punk stuff, so somebody got the bright idea to do a compilation and test out all these bands they had ignored and The Only Ones were on there and The Diodes "Red Rubber Ball." What happened was the album had come out and started getting airplay on all these AOR radio stations in the States, by which time of course, The Diodes didn't exist anymore. I was working at Attic

Records and I was getting all the American trade papers and I was like "Wow, this is crazy." It looked like "Red Rubber Ball" was going to become an American FM hit and there was a new guy, Bob Muir, who had just started at CBS Canada and he was seeing all these trade papers, and he said, "Don't we have an unreleased album by these guys in the can? Shouldn't we put it out?" And so they decided because "Red Rubber Ball" was getting all this American airplay, that they were going to stick that on the second album. And because the subject matter of "Burn Down your Daddy's House" was objectionable, they decided to take that track off and replace it with "Red Rubber Ball" on the off chance that maybe it was going to be a hit. Then they tried to re-sign the band. It was this really strange paradox that ended up helping them promote this album, but we weren't signed to the label. That's when you went on your first cross-Canada tour. The legal guy called me and he threw this piece of paper at me, and he goes, "You should sign this and you should sign back," and we said, "No. We'll help you promote the album but we're never going to sign with you again."

John C: That was still in place the first time that we played L.A., because when the thing happened at Hong Kong Café, there was the CBS/Epic representative there and being freaked out beyond anything.

MRR: Now something happened at the Hong Kong Café. Was that where there was a spitting?

John C: It was a bit more than that. Basically, we had done the Whiskey and we went on to do the Hong Kong Café. We were playing with the Circle Jerks and Agent Orange. It was a weird kind of a night.

MRR: That is getting into when hardcore was starting to happen.

John C: Yeah. It was very early surf punk hardcore. We're getting along good with all the bands, but I am up on stage and I remember standing there playing and I am watching this guy looking at the beer sitting on my amp and you can tell when someone is going to try and nick the thing and this was the first moment. Actually, the first moment was them trying to abuse our soundman, but then the guy reaches for the beer. I kicked him in the head, this was step one. The guy jumps up on stage and he is this huge guy. He was like six foot five. He was tussling with Paul and I turn and took my guitar off and went to whack him and Ian got really freaked out at me because I was whacking this guy with my guitar so Ian is pulling me. Ian is making contact and pulls me away and then I lost the guitar for half a second. Then I get hold of it and I hit him again. At this point, our soundman is up behind the guy holding him and there are bones breaking and stuff is happening. I am really whacking the guy. Then all the bouncers are onto him. We're off the stage. They take him and kick him a few times, throw him down the stairs… He then crawls up the stairs and starts pulling all the leads out of the P.A. So the bouncers jump on him, they hit him, they beat him a few times they kick him down the stairs again. He comes up again and he does it again. This guy probably has a broken collar bone at this point and god knows what else. Finally, they throw him and he goes straight through the plate glass window in the Hong Kong Café. Meanwhile, we are in the back room with the CBS representative who was just scared out of her wits. She has never seen anything like this.

Paul: I don't think anybody had seen anything like this.

Ian: But this wasn't normal.

Paul: Meanwhile, not to mention that the entire place was erupting in mayhem and we were just thinking that we have got to get our gear off stage because it is all going to get nicked.

John C: Which we borrowed from someone else who we played with at the Whiskey.

Paul: So, we were like grabbing this gear and trying to get out of there. We went out the back door of the Hong Kong Café and are down there loading and we had just heard all these plate glass windows shattering. The audience has gone out and they are smashing every window.

John C: This made all the wire services. The funny thing is, a lot of people were at that gig. I got something on my Myspace page the other day, which was this guy in L.A. and he was there on a date with his girl who ended up being in the Pandoras and they were at that gig.

MRR: You guys ran into quite a few wild gigs. In Toronto at the Colonial Underground there was a gig there when you refused to turn down your amps and the bouncers attacked you guys with pool cues.

Ian: I think the object lesson there is "don't play in a club where there is a real band upstairs."

Paul: An acoustic band.

John H: It was Long John Baldry actually.

Ian: We were just drowning out the whole place. I guess he probably said, "Turn those kids down."

John H: He was a guy getting two grand per show and we were playing for a hundred and fifty bucks per night.

Paul: If.

MRR: I know John was indirectly related to Sylvain Sylvain. I think his boyfriend's sister was married to Sylvain for a while. Rosie. Tell me about your first gig in New York City.

John C: That was CBGB's.

MRR: And you still had John Corvette in the band. Is it true that your van was stolen on one of your visits to New York City?

John C: Car. It is probably two stories in one. The very first day that we arrived in New York to play at CBGB's we were staying at this loft.

John H: Nova Scotia School of Art lofts.

John C: It was right around the corner from CBGB's. We couldn't get in so we went to lunch. We parked the car and when we came out it wasn't there. There were some questions.

John H: It had been towed. We were like these green guys from Toronto. We never understood that people would actually go and tow your car. You might get a parking ticket or something like that.

MRR: So that is a story that has been twisted and turned over the years.

John C: Well, we got a van broken into in Chicago.

Paul: When we were playing with The Ramones. They had stolen all of our bright shiny new gear that CBS had given us.

John H: Yeah, about $5,000 worth of guitars were stolen in Chicago.

Ian: We've all heard about some incredibly bad luck that Teenage Head had along the way, but I have to say that this band had a lot of bad luck too. We had the winter storms of '78, all our gear taken, our car nicked, every place we played seemed to erupt into mayhem. It was hard being in a band at that point. Interest rates were at 21%. We couldn't afford to buy anything.

John C: Do you remember that gig…this was the night before Halloween in '78 or something…this was in the little bit where John had left the band and we were playing this place and people were throwing bottles and shit. I am wearing white jeans and I look down and there is a three inch long shard of glass imbedded in my leg sticking out.

Ian: I remember. Some people took this violence thing a little too seriously.

Paul: I think one of the good luck stories is the day we got signed to CBS we had just come back from CBGB's, for some reason John Hamilton's wind screen cracked. It was like a spider web. Do you remember that?

John H: Still is. My new car has the same thing.

Paul: We were all dressed up in our Ian's punk gear. Ian's is the shop in New York where The New York Dolls and all the bands bought gear from. We bought all this gear and we were all dressed up in punk gear in John Hamilton's trashed car with broken wind screen driving out to sign our record deal, and we get pulled over by the cops. They sort of said, "Yes," and they looked at us all dressed in this leather and studs and they had never seen anything like that and said "What are you dressed for?" And John said, "We are on our way to sign our record deal," and I looked at the cracked wind screen and they were going to give him a ticket and they said, "Okay. Good luck boys." Now that's luck. They could have arrested us.

MRR: I was at a gig at the Masonic Temple when Iggy Pop and The Ramones played together, and at that gig someone handed me a flyer that was advertising a three-day bus trip to New York City to see The Diodes. Do you guys remember this?
Paul: Max's Kansas City.
John C: Yes I do.

MRR: So did you get a full bus going down there from Toronto?
Paul: I don't think it ever happened, did it?
John H: We always had good crowds at Max's though. I always think of Max's as our club. More than CBGB's.

MRR: You guys did play at Max's and Wendy O' Williams, who would later front the Plasmatics, was the emcee when you did a gig there.
John H: She introduced us.

MRR: That was the same gig where apparently Lydia Lunch was sticking her head in the P.A. stacks when you were playing.
John C: Yeah. We love Lydia.

MRR: Did you guys become friends with the bands that you played with in New York, like The Boyfriends, and The Erasers? The Erasers had Patti Smith's brother or sister in the band.
John C: I never knew anyone from The Erasers. We knew lots of people from The Boyfriends, lots of people from The Dolls, lots of people from The Fast. The Fast were the biggest band then.

MRR: "Tired of Waking Up Tired" was released May 1, 1978, and gave The Diodes a new start with rave reviews worldwide. I guess that kind of kick-started things again and picked up a little momentum with the first album.
Ian: It might have.
John C: Little bits. I also remember "Waking Up Tired" came out between the albums. We were on CBS when "Tired of Waking Up Tired" came out. I can remember we were still at the rehearsal space at Cooper's on Peter Street. Do you remember the party the day after it came out and we were like playing the thing and everyone was just going, "Wow." All of a sudden we have this sort of pop single.

MRR: You guys were also talking about touring with The Runaways and The Ramones during that terrible snow storm that shut the tour down. Did you guys ever meet Kim Fowley at any of those gigs?
John C: Yes, I did. Not in Chicago. When we first played in L.A. we had many abortive almost-went-to-L.A. trips. We were supposedly to go there with The Dead Boys, but Johnny got stabbed. We were supposed to go there with Tuff Darts but that didn't happen. It was supposed to happen over and over again. Finally, in 1980...
Ian: April 4, 1980 we headed west.
John C: We decided to just fly out and do it. So, we got booked into the Whisky-A-Go-Go. We turn up there and we are staying at the Tropicana with The Only Ones. We got out the first night and wander down the strip to the Starwood. When we walk into the Starwood, we go, "We are playing here this week can we just go in?" "Oh, who are you playing with?" "The Diodes." He goes off, comes back, grabs us, whizzes us into the VIP room, like this is real L.A. stuff and go, "Oh, the management wants to talk to you." We go upstairs and there is this huge Diodes poster on the wall of the Starwood, but we're getting to Kim Fowley here right. So anyway, the girl who was the receptionist or the girl at the door that was kind of hanging around with us a lot...I think she was going out with Mike, the drummer, she goes "Come out with me" and she takes us to this place called Odyssey where bands would like to go and it is basically an underage teen disco in L.A. I think there is no alcohol there. It is like Rodney Bingenheimer-land and we turn up at this place and we are at the door and the first person we see is this enormously tall guy who she knows and she goes, "Oh guys, you have got to meet this guy. This is Kim Fowley." So that's where we met Kim Fowley. Coming out of an underage disco in L.A.

MRR: And did he know you? Did he know The Diodes?
John C: I don't know.
Paul: I am sure he did.
Ian: He said he was a huge fan.
John C: He was kind of spaced-out, so, you know.

MRR: Did Rodney Bingenheimer play your record on his show?
Ralph: Yes he did. The Diodes did an interview on Rodney's show.

MRR: Does anybody have a recording of that?

Ralph: No.

Paul: He playlisted The Diodes on KROQ. We were playlisted because of Rodney.

MRR: Now getting back to the Philips Building, you guys practiced there. What do you remember from practicing at the Philips Building?

Ian: The Philip's Building was early, pre-album building. Bob Gallo (producer) came out there. Isn't that where he convinced us that…

MRR: So would that have been before Crash 'n' burn?

Ian: After Crash 'n' burn, but…

Paul: It was a very short period if you remember.

Ian: It was our rehearsal space leading up to the album.

John H: What Philip's Building?

Ian: It was this place down on Laird.

John C: I think we used it as a pre-production suite a couple of weeks before the first album. I know for sure that we did pre-production for the "Tired of Waking Up Tired" single and demos associated with that.

John H: We did that at Cooper's.

Ian: One of the things I remember from that particular building is that it was full of bands. All kinds of bands were there. I know that The Mods were there at the time and The Androids were there. There were lots of bands just starting up and they were using that space. It was one of the only rehearsal spaces around. The ceilings were about fifteen feet tall. They were gigantic warehouse ceilings. I do remember that one of The Mods, or soon to become The Mods, was there when Bob Gallo said, "It can't be 'Jerry Hall,' it's gotta be 'China Doll.'"

MRR: And The Ugly also practiced there.

Ian: So that was another ground zero of getting ready for the next phase.

John C: Maybe we rehearsed there, because I remember walking down the hallways and running into friends of mine from high school who were in bands.

MRR: March 23 and 24, 1978 you played the El Mocambo on the first anniversary of The Rolling Stones gig there. The show was broadcast on CHUM FM, the city's biggest rock station. How did you get that gig? Because they weren't the most punk friendly club around?

Ralph: It was a deal that CBS Records had with CHUM FM, where they snuck us into that series.

John H: The big money-churning machine.

MRR: And I heard it is about to be released on vinyl. Is that true?

Ian: Absolutely. It is going to be released as soon as our production work is finished.

Paul: It has been delivered. Hopefully it will be in time for our…

John C: It is being released by an Italian collector's label.

MRR: Now as we were saying, there was a hiatus between the first and second album. Paul, around this time you went to New York to pursue some movie projects, tell me about that.

Paul: Movie projects? Well, I briefly worked in the press office of Paramount Pictures, so I guess that was my movie project.

MRR: So you weren't starring in any movies at that point?

Paul: What, like pornography?

MRR: And John Catto, what were you doing at this time?

John C: I spent the first nine months of it mulling around wondering what the hell to do and then finally pulled it together and got a band together, so I had a band that had a pile of material that would end up being the makings of the third Diodes album. I was doing this with John Armstrong of The Concordes with a guy named Charlie Chacha in a band called Hot Rocks. We opened for the G-Rays at the Palais Royale and then did a week at the Beverley, and then, literally, the moment we started doing stuff and offers started coming in…and we did have a lot of material…then all the murmurings of CBS actually came out and deciding to release the second Diodes album came up, so it was a project that got put on ice.

MRR: Do you think when the second album was finally released that the timing affected its success as opposed to an earlier release date that you would have hoped for?

John C: It would have been better if it were earlier. In a lot of ways it was a strong album.

Ian: That was another one of those strokes of bad luck.

John H: I think we lost John Hamilton along the way as a result of the fact that they dumped us. John had another project he was working on and they had a record deal.

MRR: Was that when John would have joined The Secrets?

Paul: Yep.

MRR: The photo on the second album included your newest member, Mike Lengyell, even though John wrote and played on the second album. How did you find Mike?

Ian: It was a straight audition as I understand it. He came in, he played, I liked the fact that he had a completely solid meter. He seemed like a nice guy. We hired him on the spot.

Paul: That's the end of story. Next question.

MRR: Did you guys tour a lot for the second album?

Paul: Yeah, we did a couple of up-and-down and across-Canadian tours.

MRR: Would that have been the Circle Jerks thing in L.A.?

Paul: That definitely is when that all happened.

Ralph: Just before the second album came out we were going to do something with Bomp Records and Greg Shaw, and he actually sent me a check and we were going to finance a single, "Strange Time."

John C: It didn't exist yet.

Ralph: Anyway, because CBS was releasing the second album I had to send the check back to Greg and that was the end of that.

MRR: Now you guys must have had a lot of gigs that involved spitting. How did you guys feel about the whole spitting thing?

Ian: We didn't experience a lot of spitting.

John H: There wasn't a lot of that at the Crash 'n' Burn. That was England or something.

John C: Quite honestly, it never happened in the Toronto punk scene. It never happened within the punk scene.

Paul: It was other people.

John H: The bridge and tunnellers who read about it in the paper or who came down and thought that's what they should do.

John C: It wasn't like playing at the Vortex, where it was just a hail of spit, just like a wall of spit that every band had to go through. It didn't really happen as part of the Toronto thing. It only happened later on when we started playing straight venues.

MRR: When did you guys start working on the third album, "Action-Reaction"?

Ian: We came back from our west coast tour with our new soundman, Bo Cairo, and we did an El Mocambo gig, which, in my opinion, was one of the best concerts we'd ever done. It was in the late summer of 1980 and we were signed on the spot at the El Mocambo.

MRR: To RCA?

Ian: Friends of mine were there. David Clarkson, one of the original Diodes, came up to me with his girlfriend, Elizabeth, and said, "I can't believe you guys. You guys just sound unbelievable. I had no idea that you would evolve into this polished band." He just was gushing. My brothers came up, "Oh Ian. That's real music now. It's no longer punk music." And my brother was a classically trained flutist. Anyways, it was right on the spot. It was on the strength of that one gig that we got signed. I think we went in to record shortly after that.

John C: But there is a longer story about the Willie and Ian thing, because Willy and Ian found us at the El Mocambo.

Ian: That's where we did the actual we-have-to-perform-with-these-guys-who-are-considering-signing-us-and-if-we-do-well-they-will-sign-us.

John C: This shows how much anyone remembers.

Ian: I remember too having the meeting with Willie and Ian.

John C: It would have been right before or maybe right after the El Mocambo, but then something like two months went by where our people are supposed to call you and your people are supposed to call us, and one night I got a message to see Madness at the Nickelodian so I went. It was the first time they played in Toronto and I am sitting at a table with Willie Morrison, and he goes, "Your people haven't called my people."

John H: Sounds like a bank merger.

Ian: The point was the El Mocambo performance was the thing that triggered the album.

John C: And a mutual love for Chin Chapman.

MRR: Did the single "Catwalker" do well on the singles charts?

Ian: It certainly was played a lot on CFNY, and every time I went up north and visited friend's cottages it was on the radio. All summer long, all winter long.

John H: It was on the radio all the time.

MRR: Did The Diodes ever make a music video?

Ian: George Whiteside, who we talked about earlier, did actually produce a "Catwalker" music video of us in his studio.

MRR: And did you guys tour for the *Action-Reaction* album?

John C: Across Canada.

Ian: That would have been late 1980.

MRR: You played places like Calgary and Edmonton?

John C: Oh yeah. At that time we were old hats at that.

Ian: We were signed to the agency and we had some pretty good gigs. We opened for Gary Numan in Calgary, Ultravox all through Quebec, and finally we did Toronto at the Maple Leaf Ballroom through Concert Productions International. Michael Cohl got us there. He does The Rolling Stones thing.

John H: Maybe he will let us open for The Rolling Stones.

Ian: He said, "Let these boys open for U2. I think it would be appropriate."

John C: I will tell you a good story about Calgary. We used to always stay in this hideous hotel. I mean, this was like the *most* hideous hotel. It's like, nylon sheets and cockroaches and god knows what. People would go there and they'd be playing in Calgary and they would try to pull so that they wouldn't have to stay in the hotel. So we're playing with Gary Numan at the Calgary Arena with 10,000 seats and there are about 10,000 people there. So the night before, we go, "We'll do a test run." We booked a gig into the hotel we are staying at. This is the incredibly hideous National Hotel.

Ian: And who do we run into, but Teenage Head.

John C: Oh yeah, they were around then but that isn't actually the story... So, we are playing in the National Hotel, and the National Hotel, for anyone who has never been there, it has a little long thin bar that holds legitimately 150 people. So they start letting people in. At some point they decide to do a head-count and there were 900 to 1,000 people jammed into this bar that held 200, it was just insane. They ripped the entire ceiling out from the back to the front. When we were playing, people were telling me there were so many bodies in there that you could listen to the jukebox at the back of the room clearly because there was so many people in there they blocked the sound—just an insane gig. Wild.

MRR: The Wild West. At what point did you and Paul decide to go to England?

John C: We are talking the summer of '81.

Ian: September '81.

MRR: So you would have toured this record for about a year.

John C: Yeah.

MRR: And why did you guys relocate to England?

John C: I think there was a feeling that Ian wanted to do other stuff and...

Ian: I mean it wasn't so much artistic as it was differences, which is what often breaks bands up. Literally speaking, you've got to realize that in 1981 interest rates were running at 17-19%, there was a recession going on. There was a terribly depressed economy. In Canada we went from commanding premium dollars down to barely making our sound costs per night because nobody was coming out during that dip and we couldn't make a go of it.

Paul: I don't think it was about making a living, I just didn't want to do what we were doing for the rest of my life. I did not want to go up and down the Ontario bar circuit and play these shitholes. It is not what I wanted to do. It's not what I wanted out of music.

Ian: The Quebec and Ontario music scene was driving the Canadian music industry.

Paul: We went to Quebec and played a biker rally in an arena. This was in Temiskaming.

John C: That is one of the most memorable gigs by the way.

Paul: This was a great gig, other than a bad one, but seriously it was like the Blues Brothers "Rawhide" thing. We used to play "Born to be Wild" and we ended up playing it ten times with these bikers driving around us on their bikes in the middle of an

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arena.
John C: Actually, a very cool gig. I remember turning up at that one and we kind of fell out of the van and we did a sound check, and the club in question was the "Ghostriders." You know they were all very cool and we start to go back to the hotel and they are giving an honor rally with the bikes in formation behind the van as we go to the hotel. It just gets a bit strange as it gets on.

MRR: Ian, what did you do when Paul and John moved to England? Did you still play in a band?
Ian: No. I had already been avidly soldering my circuits together and I got a job in the computer industry. I was right there in the early stages of micro computing and I was lucky that the microcomputer thing was breaking. I got a job in September 1981 and was able to have a very successful career within the software business.

MRR: And Paul and John, you guys moved to England and formed a band with Jeremy Gluck of The Barracudas, called High Noon.
John C: Slightly wrong there. I did stuff with Jeremy but that's a little bit later. Paul and I had the band called High Noon. It was a logical development from the last version of The Diodes because when we came to England we were doing a band with Steve Robertson playing bass and Richard Citron playing drums who was from Toronto. We did that for a year, came back to Toronto, then went back again. Then we started up a totally fresh band. That's High Noon. And High Noon was with Rick Zigman and Steve Robertson on bass. Kind of a very heavy band, kind of a little bit psychedelic, psychedelic but really heavy.

MRR: Did you guys record anything?
John C: We did a lot of stuff. We had a charmed life up to a point. The very first gig that we played was the Embassy Club in London. At that very first gig EMI approached me and said, "We are really interested in you guys. We had come to see someone else that particular evening." They stayed for the first song of the next band and went, "Oh the Second Coming has come." We had incredible amounts of interest. Rusty Eagan was really interested in us. We were kind of pretty influential at that London thing at that exact moment. It was an early '80s thing. But we battled with EMI and they put us into the studio over and over and over again. So we recorded a lot of stuff.

MRR: Will anything ever be released?
John C: We shall see. It all exists.
Paul: We have four of them up on Myspace that you can go and listen to. www.myspace.com/highnoon.

MRR: Do you feel The Diodes, in the Toronto scene, received the recognition that you deserved?
Paul: I think we have now and that's what is relevant, that now it's appreciated what our contribution was to independent and alternative music in Toronto and in Canada. So I think the final result is important. At the time we weren't appreciated at all.
Ian: It was a bit of a tragedy, really.
John H: One of the things that I always think about is that it was the kind of band that could have had a 25-year career and we would have always done something interesting. It wasn't the kind of band that would have the glorified songs that you keep playing over and over. It was a band that could have gone on and developed further and further because that's always what we did. And it got kind of truncated at a certain point. I think it could have been even more influential.
Ian: We were always writing new songs, always writing new material, and we didn't let a genre stand in the way. We did pop stuff. We did all kinds of different material. We explored in the studio right away. We wanted to do new things all the time.
John H: We were a curious band.
Ian: We were *very* curious. We wanted to try stuff all the time.

MRR: There is an incredible amount of interest now in what happened thirty years ago in Toronto. I mean, tonight I have never seen so many people just to watch you guys in the basement. Why do you think there is all of a sudden so much interest with books and photo exhibits, and such an incredible amount of attention you guys are getting, and the other old bands from that scene too.
John C: I think it's thirty years but I also think the mechanics make it happen. Ten years ago it could have happened then. You could have had a huge resurgence and interest, but it didn't happen because the mechanics to distribute the interest weren't there. Now it's 2007 and the Internet is the most powerful media that could help to make these things happen. What's happened is that it has made it explode. 17-year-old girls in Japan are discovering Canadian punk bands.

MRR: And I think half the Canadian punk singles are on the walls of record stores in Japan. Aside from the upcoming live El Mocambo recording are there any other releases planned for The Diodes?
Ian: There is the *Action-Reaction* reissue that'll be coming out sometime soon.

MRR: Will that also be released on vinyl?
Paul: No. Just CD.

MRR: With bonus tracks?
John C: That would be a lot of vinyl.
John H: We did hope to record some original material this time in Toronto but unfortunately just getting our gig together and re-invent the legacy has taken up a lot of time. We didn't have enough time.
Ian: I think we underestimated the demand for airtime and time for the band to talk to people.

MRR: Now you guys just played in Liverpool England at the Cavern Club. How did that go?
Ian: It was fantastic, we loved it.
John C: It was the International Pop Overflow, which is a big power-pop festival.
Ian: It was especially good playing with the entire *Bongo Beat* roster with Ralph, Ari Shine, Plastic Heroes, and Dave Rave. It was a fantastic time.
Paul: I keep saying it is like being on tour with Johnny Cash and The Carter Family.
Ian: It sort of brought back the feeling of the camaraderie that we had early in the Crash 'n' Burn, where it was bands just doing it because they wanted to play their own music and make it happen for each other.
Paul: Everybody stood there at the front of the stage and supported each other's bands, which I thought was a great thing.
John H: Even today my favorite bands are Johnny And The G-Rays, The B-GIRLS and all the bands from that era.

MRR: And John Catto and Paul Robinson you've been living in England for quite a while, so I guess you would have a greater perspective. How has Toronto changed since the time you lived here?
John C: Quite a bit since the time I lived here. Not as much as everyone thinks. Nine years ago I think most of the things that people keep harping on about have already kicked in. It sure has changed.
John H: In '77 we went to New York to be in this scene. And now it is here.
John C: I mean, leading up to this trip everyone is going on about how violent Toronto is and I haven't seen that yet. I don't want to see it. Guns are an issue here now and there is a lot of bad gang things. We don't have that yet in London, believe it or not.

MRR: Is there any hope that we are going to see The Diodes play again after this weekend?
John C: Sure.

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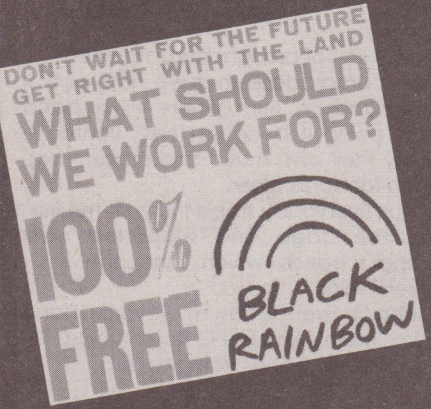
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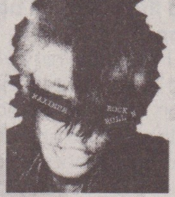

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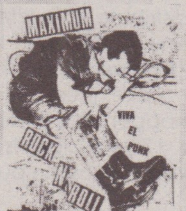
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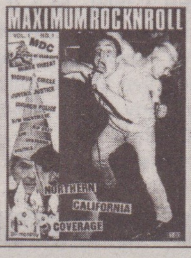
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SOTATILA

CRASS
CONFLICT

DUSKO DAMJANOVIC

This Sotatila interview was done on July 24th 2008, the eve of the annual Puntala punk festival at their vocalist Jukkeli's place in Tampere, Finland. The whole band was present to begin with, but the guitar player Caro had to leave to do a sound check for Maradona who were playing at the near-by Vastavirta-klubi the same night. Read on… Interrogation by Jukka Karihtala.

MRR: Please introduce yourselves. Names, instruments, ages, places of birth, and favorite food.

Jukkeli: Jukka AKA Jukkeli, singing shouting and jumping around. No instruments. Age 34, if I remember right. Place of birth—Rovaniemi, Lapland, Finland, Earth. Favorite food—junk food.

Caro: Guitar and backing vocals. Age 28. Place of birth Castro/Chile. Favorite food—falafel and curanto.

Georg: I play the drums and I'm 25 years old. I was born in Wolfpassing, a very small village in Austria, 100 km west of Vienna. I don't have any favorite food; I like cooking vegetarian meals.

Mundi: I'm Mundi and I'm 24 years old. I play bass and also do backing vocals. I was born somewhere in Austria. My favorite food is what they serve at this vegetarian restaurant called Vegetasia in Wien.

MRR: How did you find punk in the first place? What fascinated you about it? Would you have thought that you are still involved in year 2008? How is punk different now compared to when you first got involved—or is it?

Jukkeli: My friends were playing some fucked-up Finnish punk to me and I got immediately into it because it was something completely new. I also wondered how they could be saying this kind of stuff, if it's really allowed. [*Laughter*] And of course the music sounded *crappily* great. I actually thought I'd be a summer-punk… [*Laughter*] Maybe I was thinking that by the time I'm 34 I'd be normal, but I'm afraid I fucked it up! Of course in recent years the world has gotten so much smaller due to the internet and that kind of stuff. When I first got into punk there was maybe one concert per year in the small town I was living in. Now there are about three or four concerts per week in Tampere and there are tons of friends hanging around all the time. It is hard to follow, but I love it.

Georg: In the beginning I heard some classic punk like Sex Pistols, Dead Kennedys, Exploited, etc from my elder sister, but a bit later I got more into the DIY punk. A friend I got to know when kayaking in Germany took me to a concert where friends of his were playing at the EKH squat in Vienna. The bands that played there that night were Y and Cwill. It was really cool. I was 14 then, and it was the first DIY punk concert I went to. I was fascinated with it all and got really into all this freaky music and the freaky scene. I carried on, had a band, which changed many times, started collecting records, and took a great interest in anything concerning punk. Nowadays I'm involved in organizing concerts and tours in Vienna and abroad. I'm paying more attention to the international punk scene and getting to know a lot of people in the process. There are more and better bands around now than in the mid/late '90s.

Mundi: I've been into punk since the first time I heard Infest and haven't been able to get away from it. I still love it.

Caro: I first got into punk when I was fourteen through my brother and his friends. I grew up in a small town. You have to imagine that there was no real scene. There was not much happening, so there was not so much punk stuff at all. We were just kids who hung out in the streets listening to punk and drinking beer now and then. Mainly we listened to the Spanish and South American classic punk bands like Fiskales Ad-Hok, KK Urbana both from Chile, La Polla Records, Soziedad Alkoholika (Spain), the Exploited, and Ramones. I had a kind of punk band already at that time. That was more or less my first contact with punk. Then I had a break with punk but still had a lot of friends who were involved with it, and my brother was still punk as well.

At 20 years old, I got involved in punk/hardcore again when I was living and studying in Valparaiso and later Santiago. There was more punk than in the south. I hung out with friends who were in bands or had labels. I had a band again, but more in the melodic punk style. After that time, at the age of 22, I moved to Austria. This was when I got to know DIY punk/HC. I met nice people who were involved with political stuff, mainly concerning social justice, in connection with music. That fascinated me. That was what I wanted to do. The scene in Austria/Europe was totally different from the scene that I knew. In Austria there are more foreign bands from abroad that come to play and the scene is better organized. I think it's much easier to practice, tours, start bands, organize concerts, and things like that. Maybe that has to do with the wealth of the first world—Austria being one of the richest. Rich country equals easy living (also for punks).

FEDE

MRR: How did you meet each other? What were the circumstances that gave birth to Sotatila like? There have been at least a couple of line-up changes if I'm not mistaken. Why did they come about?

Jukkeli: I was going to the K-Town festival in Copenhagen and Georg asked if he could come with me. We were taking turns with driving and during the journey we noticed that we're both into similar kind of music. We decided to form a band and then we had to figure out the line-up, as we were both drummers. It was decided that Georg was better at playing drums, and since I'm crap at playing anything else, I would sing in my mother tongue. So it was quite easy to decide that we'd play Finnish-style hardcore punk. The first line-up was me and Georg with Pawel on bass and Christian playing guitar. Then quite soon I kicked Georg out of the band and Miguel from Venezuela was playing drums, as Georg was too busy with his other band Ruidosa Inmundicia. This didn't work out, so I had to go back to Georg and beg him to come back… [*Laughter*]. The first gig with the current line-up was in March 2007 and it seems to work really great.

Georg: It was in the summer of 2004 and we got started the next spring. I've known Mundi since my last year in school. We were in the same class and became friends as both of us were into similar kind of stuff, punk and such. I got to know Caro while going to a punk concert in the countryside.

MRR: You have quite an international line-up, with Chileans, Finns, and Austrians in your ranks. How did each of you end up in Wien? Some of you are originally from Chile. What made you decide to relocate to Europe and to Austria in particular? How long have you been here? Did you have any bands going when you were living there? Do you still paying attention to what's going on in Chile, punk or otherwise?

Georg: I was living in a small town in the countryside and getting bored there. That's more or less the case for all bored punks living in the sticks—relocating to the big city because there's lots more going on and nothing happening in the countryside, apart from going to the pub and seeing some rednecks…

Mundi: Me and Georg were living together in the countryside in an old farmhouse, and arranging gigs there when we were younger. Then we had to leave the house and ended up in Wien because there was just nothing happening where we were living.

Caro: I had a boyfriend from Austria and that was one reason that I moved to Vienna. I have live here for almost six years. I had some bands in Chile, but I started playing in Vienna with Sotatila when they asked if I wanted to play the guitar. I knew the guys and they're nice, but not always **:)**. The chance to play guitar was another reason to join Sotatila because I hadn't played guitar in a band before. I am from Chile, and I still pay attention to what's going there. All my family is there and I'm in contact with them, with friends, punks… but it is sometimes hard being that far away.

Jukkeli: I had a girlfriend in Vienna and was fed up with Finland. I also had good memories of Vienna when I had played there with my previous bands (Diaspora and Turun Tauti)… it seemed like a nice city.

MRR: For a band whose members live thousands of miles apart you have been pretty prolific with a demo, a 7" and lots of touring. What motivates you to keep it going despite the obvious obstacles caused by the logistics? How often do you get to practice? Do you write stuff separately or do you do it together when you get to rehearse?

Georg: Sometimes the rest of us come to Finland and sometimes Jukkeli comes to Austria. We make the music in Austria and we practice there on a regular basis. We do some rehearsal recordings and then send it to Jukkeli via e-mail and then he'll work on the lyrics. Everybody writes music, but nowadays it's mainly done by Mundi and Caro. It's fun for us to keep going back to Finland, hanging around here, going to festivals, or playing some concerts and practicing with all of us together.

Jukkeli: I don't practice because I'm the singer! [*Laughter*] I like this band music-wise and I also like the people involved. It also helps me to maintain my Wien-connection as I lived there for two and a half years and still feel it's one of my homes. As for the songs on *Propaganda Is Hippies*, I was drunkenly recording them with my friend Luigi in our practice room in Tampere. We recorded the stuff as a rough demo, converted it into MP3s, and sent it to the Austrian division. They went to a studio in Wien, recorded, and sent the songs back with backing vocals, then I recorded the vocals here in Finland, and that's it! Before the gigs/tours we try to practice a few times. Of course it's really complicated to make new songs, practice, and record in this way, but looks like we are managing. Actually I think it was more complicated when we all lived in the same city [*Laughter*].

Mundi: We just make some songs, send them to Jukkeli and the he lets us know if they're OK… if it sounds Finnish enough… He has the final say.

MRR: Do you always go through the lyrics so everyone knows what they mean? Or is everyone already totally fluent in Finnish?

[*The non-Finnish members show the interviewer what Finnish they know, consisting mainly of obscenities and the odd* I love you *thrown in for good measure*]

Georg: Jukkeli translates the lyrics for us.

Jukkeli: Well, sometimes I translate them or sometimes I give explanations to make the general idea behind them clear.

MRR: How are you able to do the amount of touring you do? Do you have jobs?

Georg: I clean a concert venue called Arena, which is a big music club in Vienna. I also get some unemployment benefits and social security payments and I do the door and take care of people's jackets in another place. Generally speaking, I work part-time jobs two or three days per week and get the rest of my income as unemployment benefits, so I have enough time for touring and doing stuff I enjoy.

Caro: I work a lot. I have a few part time jobs like cleaning and babysitting. I don't get unemployment benefits like the others, which makes my situation more difficult, but I get time off from these jobs easily, so I can go on the tours (without money).

Mundi: I don't have a full-time job. I've been studying to become a sound engineer and I'll be finished with school next week. I won't be looking for jobs for a while because of these tours coming up.

Jukkeli: Me too… I try to avoid working. But I do a lot of stuff. My label Kämäset Levyt is taking up quite a lot of my time. I also play drums in Riistetyt… I drive bands around, arrange gigs, and organize tours. Georg is doing this as well.

MRR: Do you have any crazy tour stories to entertain us with? Any places you especially liked or never wish to go back to again?

Jukkeli: Of course it's not always the best of situations if you are playing and sleeping in a small garage in the middle of the winter when it's negative 25 degrees Celsius… with fifteen drunks running all over you when you try to get some sleep. Maybe it's punk, but it can be a bit much. On the other hand, Greece was fucking great. The K-Town festival was terrific as well. As for this tour we're just starting with Pisschrist, I'm especially looking forward to the Shit-town festival in Copenhagen, the Puntala festival here in Finland, and Serbia in general. We've also played some nice gigs in the Czech Republic. This question is a hard nut to crack. Help me out here, Mundi!

Mundi: I think one of the best Sotatila concerts was in Helsinki in a bar called Factory on our last winter tour. Good sound, tight playing, and people seemed to like it very much. One of the worst concerts took place before me and Caro were in the band. This was at a venue called Einbaumöbel in Wien. The guitarist, the bass player and the drummer were so fucked up that they were totally useless.

POTIN

[*Much hilarity ensues amidst Jukkeli's loud statements about not remembering anything about said concert…*]

Georg: With the old line-up things sometimes tended to become a bit chaotic. With the old bass player it was more important to get drunk and have a party instead of making sure that we were able to play properly. Sometimes it was nice and fun, but other times not…

Caro: Göttingen (Germany) was a funny gig, Jukka was in a miserable state, so drunk he couldn't really sing and I could hardly play because of laughing, it was a total fuck up. And once when playing in Linköping it was so strange, boring, no emotions, nothing was going on there, it was like playing in a ghost city. Sorry Linköping.

MRR: You are obviously very influenced by Finnish hardcore from the early '80s. What do you find so fascinating about it? Do you see yourselves developing musically/lyrically or are you content to stay within this framework?

Jukkeli: For me it's quite obvious, being Finnish…

Georg: I like it because it's so raw and it sounds original to me. It doesn't sound like it was done as a trend or something… just churning out what they liked to play, spontaneous and doing their own thing, not giving a shit what others think about it. It's from the heart. Jukkeli being from Finland plays a major part in the kind of music we play, but I also think it is a mix of sorts. We are also influenced by D-beat stuff and other punk styles. We can't be a real Finnish hardcore band as there is only one Finn in the band. We can't keep it real. [*Laughter*]

Jukkeli: I think we play a bit faster than the Finnish bands. It's because Georg and Mundi used to play grindcore and the rest are in Ruidosa Inmundicia, which is really fast as well. We have some D-beat influence, coming from Sweden maybe, and we like some Japanese stuff. We can't be a real Austrian hardcore band either, because my German is so fucking crappy.

Mundi: My mix of music for Sotatila is listening to classic Finnish and Japanese hardcore and then writing some fast songs.

Caro: I like Finnish hardcore, but the main influence in my songs comes from other international HC/punk bands from the '80s. I'm a big fan of Spanish and South American HC/punk.

MRR: Jukkeli, I suppose you're in charge of the lyrics. They can have quite a humorous slant and contain many a reference to Finnish HC lyrics of yore that may be lost on the non-Finnish speaking listeners. How do you draw the line between the humor in the lyrics as an effect and becoming mere punk self-parody?

Jukkeli: I try to make my lyrics serious but also ironic. I'll also admit to stealing some parts from old bands, but this is obvious only to people who know their Finnish punk history and speak the language. I also like to use different Finnish dialects in my lyrics, having lived in Northern, Eastern, Western, and Southern parts of the country. In general I like the mixture of serious and humorous stuff, also in my life as well. I think it's up to the listener to draw the line between what's serious and what's humorous in my lyrics. Hopefully they make some people think, but also smile.

MRR: Many political/social issues are dealt with in your lyrics. Are you active in any groups/projects outside the band?

Georg: Earlier on I was somewhat involved with the EKH squat, doing some stuff there, but to be honest I'm not with any political group. I know some people who are working in political collectives…from time to time we play solidarity concerts.

Caro: I am not with any political group in Austria, but I support some collectives from South America… helping them with money, playing benefit gigs, and letting them release our music.

Jukkeli: I'm not active in political groups and I have no interest in getting involved with endless conversations that will never change anything. But I always like to help people who are involved in good political movements. I like doing benefit concerts for good causes too. I'm more of a supporter than an activist. Anyway, my heart is always on the side of people who still have energy to try to make the world a better place, even though I kinda lost my hope already.

Mundi: I'm not in any political groups either, but I consider playing benefits. It's not that often, but I sometimes go to demos with friends.

MRR: Where so you all stand politically? How much common ground does Sotatila have politically/socially/personally? Is it usually a harmonious co-existence or have you had any serious disagreements?

Georg: I think I come from a left-wing background for sure. My family is sort of left wing concerning social justice and human rights. This is where some of my basic ideas come from. I'm trying to lead an alternative life compared to the common social norms and mainstream. We get on well together in the band and we have a lot in common.

Jukkeli: I try to avoid all politics whether it's right or left. My father told me I'm a nihilist. I guess it includes everything that I am: vegetarian, pacifist, anti-religion, anti-work, anti-politics, etc.

Caro: I consider myself being left as I grew up during the dictatorship of Augusto Pinochet. My family also has a left wing political background and suffered during the dictatorship. I saw a lot of repression. I think that basically we all have the same point of view on life.

MRR: One of your songs, "Työ," deals with the social responsibilities and expectations we face. The lyrics are, "Work or DIY / A career or a life." Do work and DIY have to be mutually exclusive?

Jukkeli: You can have both work and DIY. You can do DIY as work. The kind of work I refer to in this song is something that grinds you down, when you're just told what to do and considered brainless and that's kind of killing you, suffocating your motivation and inspiration and everything. I want to do things on my own and not be in a position where someone would just push me into having some shitty job.

Georg: But I don't think that all people can choose. Some people have to get shitty jobs and do that for a long time in order to survive. It's not easy for everybody to find alternative jobs. A lot of people have to have factory jobs and work 40 hours per week because they don't have any other possibilities. They have to find the means to support their families, pay rent and stuff like that.

Jukkeli: I wrote the lyrics [*thinking of*] Western countries where it's obviously easier to choose this DIY lifestyle. It's not as easy for someone living in, say, China as it is in Finland or Austria.

Georg: I think working is not that bad if you don't feel that you're constantly being pushed down, if you are able also to have time and energy to do stuff that might be more important for you.

Jukkeli: In this same song I also bring out how people are perceived in the eyes of society—if you don't have a job you are a loser, and if you don't even want a job you are crazy. At least that's what they are telling you when you visit the job center… that's my main point with these lyrics.

MRR: What do you think are the biggest strengths and weaknesses of the DIY attitude in punk?

Jukkeli: If you can do everything by yourself it always makes things easier. You don't have to deal with big companies. You're just better off dealing with your friends. There's this circle of friends who know how to do certain things. For example, there might be someone who could fix your car and you can cook him/her a meal to return the favor and such. You can see this in the way the Puntala festival is organized. In the end, DIY may work just fine because everyone has their personal abilities that they can put in good use.

Georg: One thing I don't like about the current DIY thing is when people are pretending to be DIY or underground but all in all it's very similar to the mainstream. In my opinion the most important thing is to know the people you're dealing with, because things can get a bit impersonal with e-mails and MySpace these days. Strange things can happen if you don't really know what the other people are up to. You have to be able to trust the folks you are working with.

Jukkeli: Yes, the shittiest thing about DIY is when it's not DIY anymore actually.

MRR: The 7" was co-released between Jukkeli's label Kämäset Levyt and Plague Bearer in Denmark. How did the co-operation with PB come about?

Georg: We thought that Jukkeli could release the record to begin with. Then we played a concert in Copenhagen and Jakob of Plague Bearer was there. He liked us and after the concert we asked him if he'd be into releasing our stuff, doing a co-release with Kämäset Levyt or something like that.

MRR: Where do you see punk heading nowadays? In some ways it seems to have fallen into a rut, with lots of increasingly separate subgenres and trends coming and going (be it bands trying to sound like Tragedy, Swedish HC, Japcore, the Wipers, Suomi-82, or whatever). Do you think it's possible for punk to keep reinventing itself and staying fresh with some originality, yet not forgetting the past?

Jukkeli: I think it's really hard already and getting harder all the time to have your own original sound. There's too much of everything—too many bands and records. It's hard to keep track of everything and harder to do something special.

Georg: I think it's no problem if you are a fan of some style, but it gets problematic if you want to do it just because it happens to be trendy at the moment. You should play the way you do because you love it, not because it's popular right now. This retro-US stuff seems to be big now and same for the D-beat stuff. It just sucks if you merely take a record and just copy the fuck out of it, without even trying to add your personal touch and own style to the sound. Things can move forward if, for example, you get a bunch of people with different (punk) musical backgrounds and use that as the starting point of developing your own sound. For example, Caro is not such a die-hard Finnish hardcore fan as me, Mundi, or Jukkeli. This adds something more to the mixture. She's more into Spanish hardcore…

Caro: Yes, that's right, copying sucks!!! Keep it fresh. But, for sure, it's hard to have an original sound because punk music is quite old already. [*Laughter*]. At least you can always find four good chords without stealing them from your favorite record.

MRR: Apart from Finland, are there any other specific areas/countries whose bands are close to your heart? Do you pay close attention to current international punk/HC scene?

Georg: I'm a big fan of '80s Italian hardcore/punk and Spanish hardcore/punk. I also like old US and Norwegian stuff a lot. I really don't care which country a band comes or if it is old or not—I like it when it kicks ass.

Mundi: I like a lot of stuff from Scandinavia, especially Norwegian HC, older Japanese HC and the Burning Spirits stuff as well. I saw DSB live a couple of times and those gigs were so great.

Jukkeli: My favorites are mainly Finnish, English (especially old UK anarcho punk), Polish, Brazilian, and Japanese bands. I just like all fucking punk from no matter where it comes from, as long as it is good. Some other kinds of music too…

Caro: I like a lot of old Spanish, South American, and Norwegian HC/punk. But I'm interested in all good HC/punk bands around the world. I'm also fond of collecting records.

MRR: Caro, Yrjö, Mundi, what is your opinion of the punk scene in Finland compared to Austria?

Georg: I think the scene in Finland has been going on for a longer time. There used to be tons of bands in Finland and that seems to still be the case. The party aspect appeals to me—Finnish people like to party and I like that too. The punk scene in Finland seems to have always been more active compared to Austria. Austria never had a lot of internationally well-known bands. The history of Austrian punk is less in the way of making music than in other (political) activities. This does not mean that there are no punk music freaks in Austria and that there are no political punks/activities in Finland.

Mundi: That's it. I wouldn't go as far as to say that punk is dead in Austria, but there just aren't that many punks there. Maybe most of the people that would be punks are into underground techno music.

Caro: Austria is a small country… that may be one point, but more or less I agree what Georg says.

MRR: Punk is not always a bed of roses. What do you like the most about the punk and what makes you the most annoyed? What inspires you to stay involved?

Georg: I like to travel around and meet friends and see different places, people whose lives are different (not exactly like mine). I like that "punks" try not to be sucked into by the norms of this society. I'm not totally cut off from that, but you can at least strive to find your own way. I dislike trends… People with a holier-than-thou attitude also annoy me a bit. I don't like those kinds of people who have been involved for a couple of years and see themselves fit to tell you what to do. I don't like rock stars in the punk scene or scenesters and I also don't like the totally fucked-up punks who are more junkies than anything else. I think friends and music keeps me involved!

Jukkeli: I mostly agree with what Georg just said. Getting to know new, interesting, and great people and the possibility to travel a lot is what gets me going as well. I'm not overly keen on people who maybe are not as punk as they pretend to be. Often people can be too fucked up by drugs, which is a shame. I don't like these hyper-political people who are looking down on other people and being negative, giving the idea that they are getting things done, but at the end of the day it is just hot air or even detrimental to the causes they rally around. And sometimes the punks are too stinky! [*Laughter*]

Caro: I like meeting people, travelling, seeing so many countries and places I would not get to otherwise, and the fact that you can realize some new ideas. It fascinates me with countries in the east—like Romania and Serbia—that people work hard to organize our concerts, are friendly, and take good care of us, although their daily life is not easy at all. I think these things and the whole network of friends keeps me going and staying punk. I'm not at all interested in the political correctness hype and punk police. I totally agree what Jukka says about the hyper-political people.

DUSKO DAMJANOVIC

MRR: All of you have other bands as well. Can you tell us what's going on with them? Riistetyt's bass player Nappi left the band a while ago. What's up with Riistetyt now?

Jukkeli: Yes, Nappi left the band and we've had a couple of practices with Piise, who is one of the original members of Riistetyt. It sounded really great and I hope it works out.

Mundi: Georg, me, and Caro have Ruidosa Inmundicia—fast hardcore punk (www.ruidosainmundicia.net). So far we have released a demo, one 7" and a split-LP with Solid Decline from Germany on Thought Crime Records in Europe and Residue Records in the US. There's a Ruidosa Inmundicia interview in *MRR* #291 if people want to check it out. I also started playing in and old Wien band called Cold World that got back together again. Cold World had some releases out on Sound Pollution back in '93 and '94. They needed a bass player and I jumped in. The drummer used to play in an early/mid-'80s band called Extrem, which some of the readers might know.

Georg: Ruidosa Inmundicia also has a new 7" in the works and it should be coming out on Heartfirst Records from Germany. We try to tour a lot.

Caro: I also play in a crusty HC/punk band called Maradona. But I don't have much time to play and practice with them because of Ruidosa Inmundicia and Sotatila.

MRR: Could you please tell us something that could be of interest to the readers about the cities you live in? Would you consider living someplace else? Good local bands to look out for?

Georg: There are four or five venues for punk concerts in Wien. EKH is a squat that has been running for 18 years. We organize gigs there sometimes. I think it is the best place for punk gigs in Vienna. Then there's Tüwi, which is a student club. They mainly do alternative stuff, but also punk concerts from time to time. Arena is a big venue, but it's possible to organize DIY concerts there as well. Then there's I:DA, a political anarchist bar, but they don't do (punk) concerts anymore. Living in Wien is okay. Sometimes it seems that not that much happens compared to some other cities. But there's also a fair bit going on since its location is so central and basically most of the bands that tour Europe also come to Vienna. As for bands, there's Brambilla, Maradona, Cold World, Kurwa Aparata, Determination, and Feeding Time. There are not so many bands I like personally, the abovementioned are more or less it. There are lots of project bands and stuff like that, but they usually exist for half a year or so and then quit. And, yes, I think I could live in other cities—there are a lot of cities I like.

Jukkeli: In Tampere most of the gigs happen at Vastavirta-klubi. There are also a few other venues for punk concerts, but Vastavirta is the main spot. Sometimes there are some squats… As for bands, some old bands are still going like Kohu-63 and Riistetyt. Karanteeni got back together and do their 77-style punk. Massacre got active again as well—they are not actually from Tampere, but live near-by. As for newer bands, Kyklooppien Sukupuutto has Tampere as their home base. There's No Kids, some members of Diskelmä live here… Same for Juggling Jugulars. People are spread all over, it seems! Rakkaus, Valse Triste, Anti-Kontrol all have some Tampere connection these days. I'm very happy to live here now. Pispala is also very beautiful area just to have a nice walk around. There are lakes and forests just in the middle of the city and some nice punks to get extremely drunk with any day.

MRR: What other interests in life do you have apart from playing in a punk band? Some of you have jobs… What about hobbies, big career plans, and such?

Mundi: I'm mostly interested in things connected with music, practising and playing with my bands. I'm also collecting records and now I'm starting to record bands. I'll just have to find a way to rake in some money to get good equipment… due to my studies in sound engineering I should be able to get things done properly.

Georg: I do much the same—hang around in the punk scene, travel, organize gigs/tours… But sometimes I also like to kick back and relax a bit, and cook, hang about with friends…

Jukkeli: I have many beloved hobbies, like drawing, graphic design, travelling, record label/distro shit, computer shit, recording, sound stuff, driving bands around, organizing gigs/tours, video stuff, cooking, record collecting, drinking, and partying with friends… Blah blah blah…

Caro: I like to play and sing Latin American folk music with my friends, play the piano, be lazy when possible and watch movies, and go for walks with my dog.

MRR: What's coming up next for Sotatila? Where can people find your stuff? Where do you think you will be in five years, both as a band and as people?

Mundi: In five years I hope to have toured the US and Japan. We should also have some new records out, 7"s perhaps… Some stuff on compilations should also be coming out in the near future.

Jukkeli: I hope we will be so big that we'll have an interview in *MRR*. [*Laughter*]

Georg: Probably we'll be playing in a squat or in a youth center for 50 people. [*Laughter*]

Caro: Writing new songs for our next releases. We would like to go to Australia next year, those are our plans so far. Ask me again in five years, the future is unwritten. [*Laughter*]

Jukkeli: Our stuff is available from my label Kämäset Levyt or Plague Bearer in Denmark and from good distros all over. At least Havoc Records and Feral Ward carry Sotatila in the US. Any distros interested in getting copies of the 7", please feel free to get in touch (trades OK). Can I take a shower now? [*Laughter*] ■

Contact **Sotatila** or **Kämäset Levyt Records**:
Jukka Nakari — Vallikatu 28 a 2 — 33240 Tampere — Finland / Europe

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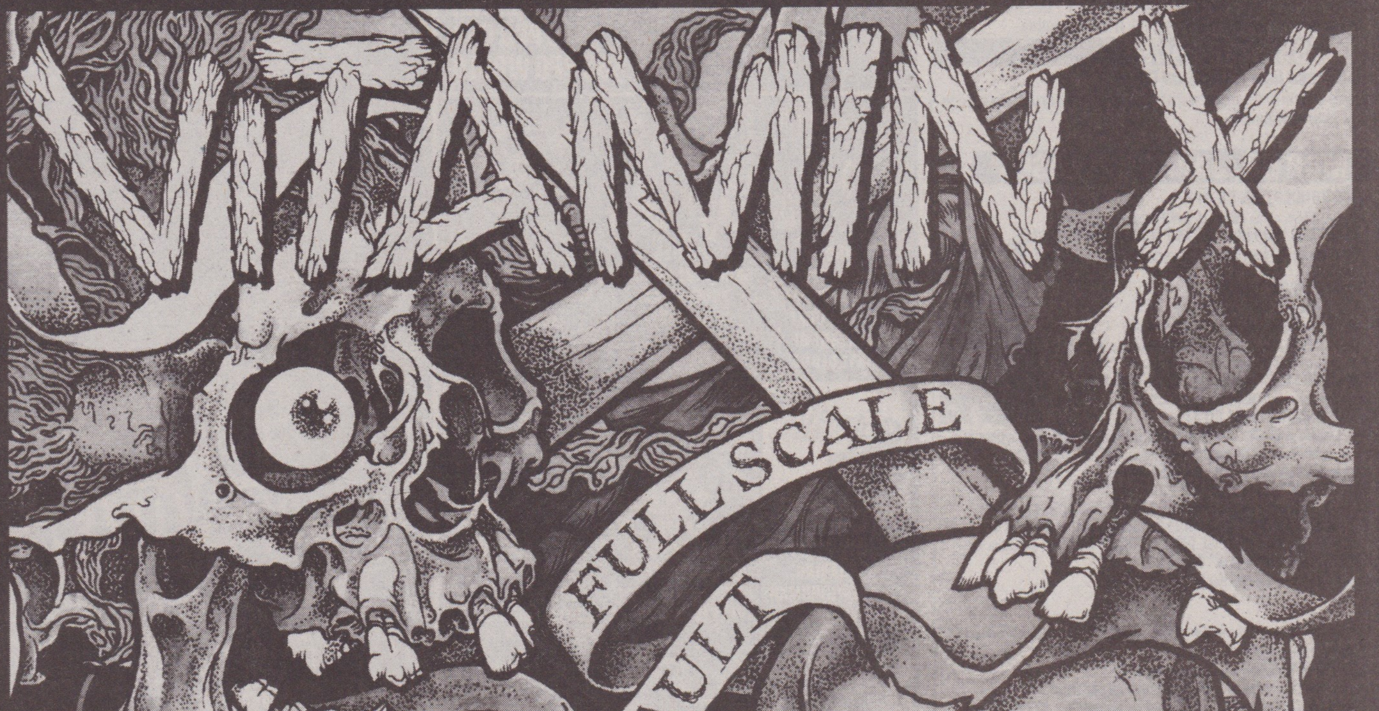

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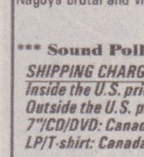

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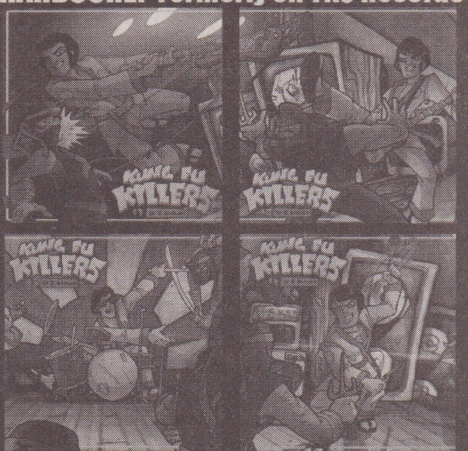

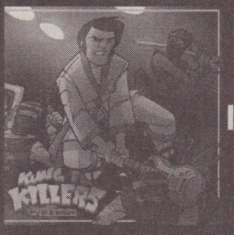

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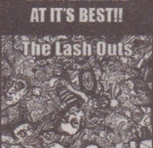

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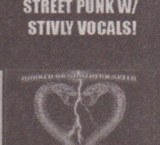

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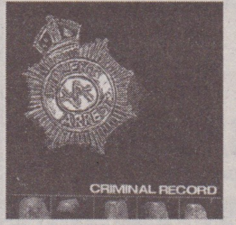

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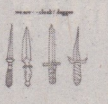

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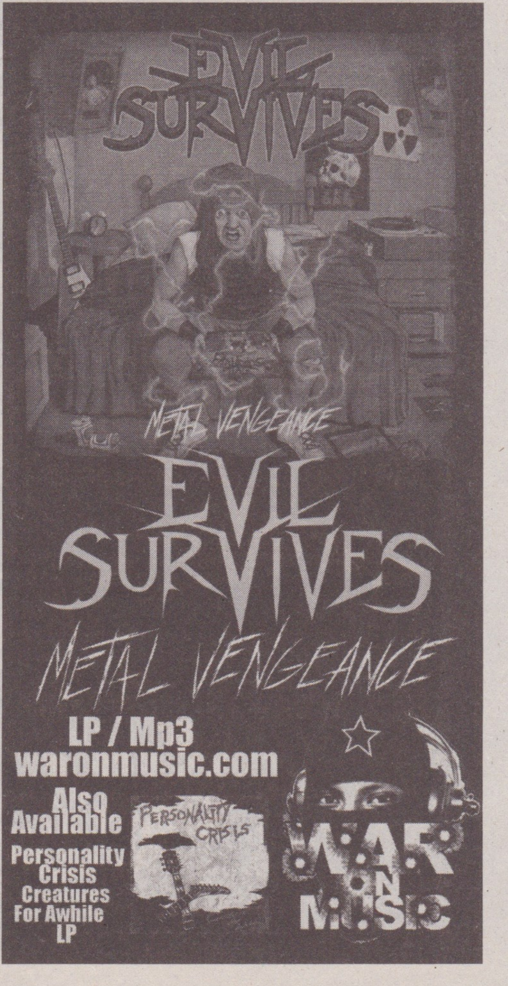

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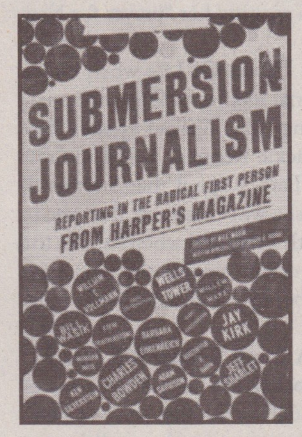

Submersion Journalism: Reporting in the Radical First Person from Harper's Magazine
Bill Wasik, Editor
336 pages ∑ $26.95
The New Press
38 Greene Street
New York, NY 10013

Undercover journalism, perhaps more than other forms, contains the explosive potential to open up new worlds for its readers, to transport them into subcultures, situations, and communities whose dynamics can sometimes remain hidden and even opaque. To do so, however, requires a delicate balancing act of penetrating insight and generous empathy. Taking up the, as the title of this anthology puts it, "radical first person," embedding oneself in an unfamiliar context (sometimes under admittedly false pretenses) in order to illuminate some facet of it, demands a precarious authorial dance, one similar to what I imagine must occur with journalists (more literally) "embedded" with military units in Iraq: you must keep your distance in the name of some notion of 'journalistic objectivity,' while ultimately realizing that you rely on your subjects for your own personal safety in a very real way. In other words, an author must do justice to two sometimes-competing ethical demands: one, for fearless reportage, and the other, for conveying the truth and humanity of one's cohort, whose values one may not share. Somewhere within that tension, or perhaps in oscillating between its poles, lies reporting as it should be.

That said, *Submersion Journalism* gets it about half right. A collection of short essays culled from the last several years of *Harper's Magazine* (roughly: the Bush years), the book is, to say the least, deeply divided against itself. Some of the pieces touch greatness: Charles Bowden's chronicle of the life of a drug informant along the Mexican border, for instance, conjures palpable dread while never losing sight of the very real attachment he develops with the subject, while Willem Marx's account of his own summer spent as, to use his phrase, a "misinformation intern," placing pro-U.S. military stories in Iraqi newspapers, deftly charts the threshold of journalistic compromise. Others, while never failing to provide a rush of that pure voyeuristic pleasure that comes in seeing what habitually remains veiled, falter in important ways mostly centering on an inability of the author to truly ingratiate himself to *his* environment (indeed, I could write a whole appendix to this review regarding the curious paucity of female voices in this compilation, with only Barbara Ehrenreich holding it down against a tide of 'man-on-adventure' narratives). For example, neither Wells Tower's account of canvassing for Bush in Florida in the fall of 2004, nor editor Bill Wasik's description of his somewhat inadvertent invention of the 'flash mob' phenomenon can keep the authors' ultimate disdain for their subjects from creeping into their prose. It plays too easily into what one would expect from…well, from exactly the kind of person who would read or write for *Harper's*.

I'm not asking that we get tightly-wrapped morality tales, of the Hollywood-'look-we're-all-flawed-and-that's-A-okay!' variety, but merely for an acknowledgement that the point of this kind of work is supposed to be to vault the anthropological ravine between reporter and reported. Of the fifteen pieces included here (I implore the reader not to bother with the dripping self-satisfaction of the introduction; if ever the Right needed any help shoring up its caricature of the Left's 'elitism', I recommend this as a starting point), a good portion get the job done. The rest remain compulsively readable, but will leave you ineluctably asking: At the expense of *what*? Or, rather, *whom*?

—Max Tremblay

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Walter and his DIY book imprint, Go Fuck Yourself Press, continues to expand their scope of punk literature. What started as a publishing house for Walter's memoirs (of growing up punk in Canada in the '80s) grew to include fictional literature from him, as well as other writers who are cut from the same cloth (in short, nothing you'd give your mom to read). Now, Walter has paid the ultimate homage to his past and those involved by writing this—a thorough and linear history of the seminal Winnipeg punk band Personality Crisis.

Walter digs deep, often going so far as to note band member's parents' backgrounds. Many childhood details follow and we get a good idea of what led the eventual members of Personality Crisis to become punkers in the first place. There is a long line of previous bands and early incarnations before Personality Crisis hit the scene and Walter lists the lot of them. Without knowing many of these bands the story can get a little confusing and overwhelming, but to illustrate how Personality Crisis came to be, this is all pertinent information and Walter does good to include it. Once the tour stories start it becomes all sorts of fun to read, and as one would hope, there is a Where Are They Now-type of epilogue.

For anyone growing up in Winnipeg this is required reading as it traces the birth of punk in the area. It also gives a vivid overview of how punk—or more appropriately, hardcore—worked 25 years ago. The touring, communicating, recording, and the mentality behind it all…not much has changed but that is thanks to a template bands like Personality Crisis helped to create.

Perhaps not coincidentally, the Winnipeg label War On Music recently re-released the Personality Crisis opus *Creatures For Awhile*.

—craigums

MOVIES

BRING ME THE HEAD OF GENE SISKEL

CAROLYN KEDDY

MEN ESPECIALLY WERE SO FRIGHTENED

Depending on how much you like or don't like Patti Smith you will probably feel the same about the new quasi-documentary **Patti Smith Dream Of Life**. Director Steven Sebring spent ten years following Smith around. The result is more of a fanboy tribute to his idol than a documentary. There is an overwhelming number of shots of Smith standing, sitting, staring off into space while her recitation of her poetry plays. It is a nice touch if you want to be listening to poetry, but if you want more of a look at Smith's somewhat amazing and interesting life it is a frustrating approach.

Smith recites the story of her life in the first three and a half minutes of **Patti Smith Dream Of Life**. She was born in Chicago followed by the birth of her sister, a move to Philadelphia, and then her brother was born. Her family then moves to New Jersey where her sister was born. She moves to New York into the Chelsea Hotel with Robert Mapplethorpe. She releases some albums, then moves to Detroit and marries Fred Sonic Smith. They have two kids. She releases another album. Mapplethorpe dies. Fred dies. Her brother Todd dies. Richard Sohl of the Patti Smith group dies. She and the kids move back to New York. She gives the viewer the main events, and it doesn't get much more personal through the film.

Smith's spoken word recounting of her life story seems over rehearsed. She is a performer so it probably is. She seems to name drop quite a bit too, but I guess that is what happens when you know too many famous people. Allen Ginsberg calls her to console her after Fred's death. Sam Shepard gave her a 1931 Gibson guitar that Bob Dylan once tuned. She used to wait in the lobby of the Chelsea Hotel for William Burroughs. During the film she visits the grave of William Blake leaving flowers on it as well as Arthur Rimbaud's grave. There don't seem to be any ordinary people in Smith's life.

That is until the film crew visits Smith's parents' house. Smith is still close to her parents. She comments that her dad makes the best coffee. She shows off her mother's collection of cows and the landscaping that she did around the house. Her dad jokingly complains that he lost his hearing because he went to see her perform. She jokes with her dad about the dog's slobbering.

Patti Smith Dream Of Life is beautifully shot in black and white. There is surprisingly little musical performance used. One particularly interesting live scene of Smith playing in Japan shows the audience going crazy and Smith intensely singing, but the music playing is a noise composition instead of what is being played on stage. There is a lot of looking at Smith across the room while she is trying to look like she is not posing for the camera. We see her driving in cars, flying in planes, riding in trains. She is backstage with her band. She is at home showing off small keepsakes from her life: her favorite dress from her childhood and her son's baby shirt. There is also little footage of Smith from her early days in New York. One funny one has a young, higher voiced Smith reciting her "prayer for New York." She is relaxed and smiling.

There are a few occasions in **Patti Smith Dream Of Life** when Smith drops her guard enough to reveal some personal moments. One particularly moving one is remembering writing a song "She Walked Home." She wrote the song when she read that when Jackie Kennedy heard she was dying, she went for a walk alone in Central Park. I like it that Smith still refers to her as Jackie Kennedy even though she was Onassis at the time of her death. Smith recalls playing the song with Fred, and when he was too ill to play he would just sing it. A recording of him singing the song plays in the background. Smith never recorded it because it became Fred's song. (www.dreamoflifethemovie.com)

Patti Smith is not mentioned in **She's A Punk Rocker UK**, but her influence is definitely felt. **She's A Punk Rocker UK** focuses on some of the female punks who were around London during the first wave of punk rock. The interviewees span the field from famous to not that well-known women. Interviewed is Poly Styrene from X-Ray Spex, Eve Libertine from Crass, Gee from Crass, Gaye Advert from the Adverts, Vi Subversa from Poison Girls, artists Caroline Coon, Michelle from Brigandage plus others. Each has their stories and experiences of being in the early punk scene. It seems that although females are mostly left on the edges of the history of punk at the time it didn't matter what sex you were. Everyone was participating.

Eve Libertine recalls that she was first just a fan of Crass. She would be the one person left watching the band at their shows. She thought they were fantastic. Then she started reading at Crass shows. That lead to her writing songs and singing with the band. Other interviewees have their stories of getting involved, going to gigs, the fashion, the politics, the gobbing, and the violence.

Of course outside of the scene people were often confused and hostile toward the female punks. Caroline Coons recalled being on tour with the Slits the reaction was, "total hostility. People were just absolutely outraged that women could dare walk out in public like that, making themselves look unattractive." Brigandage's Michelle agrees, "Everywhere you went people either took photos of you or wanted to beat you up."

The filmmaking style of **She's A Punk Rocker UK** might turn some people off. There is a lot of Day-Glo coloring to backgrounds for the interviews. The film title appears between every segment no matter how short. Surprisingly that didn't annoy me as much as I would have expected. I guess you sort of get used to it and block it out. Rubella Ballet's singer Zillah Minx made the film so her band is featured in the film more than the other bands. (www.myspace.com/shesapunkrockeruk)

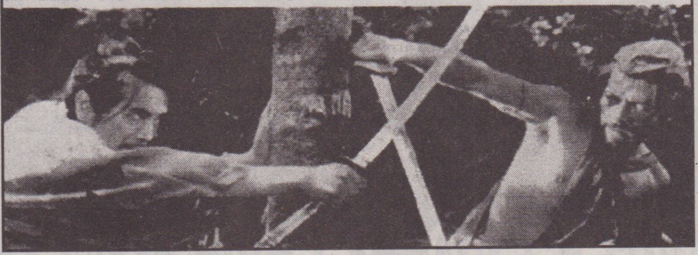
An interesting concept, but **American Music: Off The Record** doesn't quite pull off what it attempts to achieve. The theory is to figure out why the music industry, including record companies and radio stations, doesn't represent the music that musicians around the country are actually playing. Of course, the obvious reason that most of the industry is owned by corporations who could care less about music is brought up by many throughout the film.

American Music: Off The Record focuses mainly on blues rock and country bands. I guess punk bands are still assumed to reject the industry even though I am sure many would probably love to become famous just like those interviewed. There are some older musicians such as Jackson Browne, Country Joe, Edgar Winter, Les Paul, Lee Ranaldo, and Brian Wilson interviewed as well as younger ones you probably never want to hear. Most of them are performing to small audiences, but at least they are doing it.

Whereas I already know the music industry is lame, I enjoy hearing the stories of how the musicians have been screwed over by their record companies. One of the best recollections doesn't even make it into the film. It is an extra on the DVD. A member of the Alloy Orchestra recalls losing songs to both Warner and Disney. The band tried to fight both corporations, but ended up having to settle when their lawyers were no match for the corporate lawyers. Commander Cody summed it up nicely, "Essentially, the same thing is happening today as always has been happening in popular music. It sucks." (www.myspace.com/amusicofftherecord)

I am always looking for films to review. If you made one, send a copy to Carolyn Keddy, PO Box 460402, San Francisco, CA 94146-0402. If your film is playing in the San Francisco Bay Area, let me know at carolyn@maximumrocknroll.com. I will go see it. www.carolynkeddy.com

FINAL CUT BY STEVEN SPINALI



ACCURSED JAPANESE

It's a good thing when "little" movies get releases—even more so when it happens with those freaky little movies that otherwise would have slipped by. Sion Sono's **Ekusute** is odd even before you step into the theater. The poster features a picture of a Japanese woman with long, black hair, but in a seeming gesture of punkiness gone wacky, every strand stands completely on end as if she were being fed an electrical current. And then there's the film's title in Engish, **Hair Extensions**. Starting off this way, the film just *has* to be good.

When a pair of security officers visits the docks late at night, their attention is captured by a pungent smell coming from one of the shipping boxes. Inside is a tightly packed load of human hair, and in the front, a young girl's body, completely bald. She seems to be dead, and we discover later that her internal organs have been harvested. A charm bell attached to the girl rings, which always means bad news.

When the girl's corpse is finally extricated from the massive box of hair, it finds its way into the morgue. Yamazaki (Ren Osugi) works there as an attendant, and when the doctors are away, he sorts through the body bags in the hope of finding girls with good hair. He has something of a hair fetish, and he steals large portions of the best hair to use as extensions for fashion-conscious ladies. The little dead girl fascinates him in particular, since the corpse seems to generate a bounty of first-rate hair, even after death.

New hair stylist Yuko (Chiaki Kuriyama, the yo-yo killer Go-Go Yubari from **Kill Bill Part 1**) has her own problems. Her sister Kiyomi (Tsugumi) is a hateful soul, a stay-away-from-home mom who takes great pleasure in abusing her little daughter, Mami (Miku Sato). The girl's spirit is so badly broken that she can barely speak above a whisper. As Yamazaki will soon discover, this girl has *uncommonly* nice hair.

In fact, Yamazaki soon steals away with the corpse from the morgue. Resting comfortably on its own cot, the body soon grows a mammoth quantity of hair; seeing the potential, Yamazaki inaugurates sell the cursed hair to all the women in Yuko's salon. But the women who wear the extensions find that it actually invades their bodies, as if it had a life of its own. The hair strangulates its victims, creeps into orifices, and even threatens to pull their bodies apart.

With women in nearly every major roles and scenes, **Ekusute** will have a natural appeal to ladies, or rather women who like horror. And although a strange concept like this is a natural for lovers of camp, the film seems to take itself fairly seriously. (Or at least as seriously as a movie about rampant hair can be taken.)

Director Sono's most famous work is **Suicide Club**, in which a bounty of teenagers jump en masse onto train tracks and from the tops of buildings. At least here, Sono was able to justify the rivers of blood by commenting on the absurdity of trends. The social commentary didn't make his film any more agreeable, and **Ekusute** doesn't bother much with social commentary. I suppose you could conjure up some nonsense that it addresses another sort of fashion, but that's probably a stretch. At its most basic level, **Ekusute** is about a hair curse that goes horribly awry, and a hair fetish that's almost as kinky.

In any case, it's one bizarre concept.

Well, how about this for a concept: A hat-maker, plain but hard-working, falls victim to a curse that ages her fifty years, after which she makes herself a trainee in a walking mansion. It's the kind of thing that would only make sense in blatant fantasy—one reason why **Howl's Moving Castle** comes off as so engagingly original. This is the latest film by Japanese animation master Hayao Miyazaki, whose **Spirited Away** won a clutch of international awards in 2002. Miyazaki claimed at that time that he was going to retire, but he clearly has no interest in keeping his own promise.

The setting is an amalgam of strangely disparate elements that somehow manage to fall together. Sophia is a young, ordinary-looking hat-maker who lives mostly in a mundane world notable for its martial flavor; military bands march through the streets, and soldiers in peaked hats cruise the streets. It looks almost like 19th century Britain, though everyone speaks fluent Japanese.

Sophie's world changes forever when some off-duty soldiers manage to corner her in a dark edge of town. But the enigmatic Howl saves her, and seconds later they're both pursued by a small army of oily shape-shifters wearing top hats. Howl, a wizard of works, dispenses with the creatures, which turn into an oil slick, and the pair fly away.

This works to the girl's advantage, but only for a short time. Soon, the Witch of the Waste, who's as hefty as she is powerful, demands that Sophie lead the way to Howl. Disgusted, the witch makes the girl age half a century in the time it takes to spit out a curse. Wrinkled Sophie is mortified, and feels her only choice is to leave town, where she decides on her next residence, Howl's Castle.

The castle itself is one of the highlights of the film. It's a wooden ark that has four legs and travels freely between various realms. The castle itself is usually hidden in the mists of the country, where it's not vulnerable to attack. But once inside the castle, the exits have programmable dials that open to anywhere else, no matter how obscure the location.

Sophie, Howl, and the castle will soon be near the center of the conflict, and be the only ones capable of stopping it.

Films by Hayao Miyazaki are huge hits whenever they're released in Japan, often knocking Hollywood blockbusters from the top positions. Although their subject matter may be quite violent, the films are invariably optimistic and fanciful. As animation, his films have a strong concentration of younger characters, but even all-adult audiences seem to enjoy them.

Howl's Moving Castle doesn't have the outrageous extremes of visual imagination you'd find in the great **Spirited Away**. It doesn't quite capture the came sense of period authority as Miyazaki's ninja tale, **Princess Mononoke**. In its general mood and flavor, it's far away from **My Neighbor Totoro** and **Kiki's Delivery Service**—two of his best loved films, both gentle fantasies. In its general style, it's closest in many ways to his very best film, **Porco Rosso,** but these kinds of comparisons can't help but leave you feeling that his latest is at least comparatively minor.

However, taken on by itself, **Howl's Moving Castle** stands up, and really only falters in comparison to comparative masterworks in the genre. If you're new to Miyazaki, it might not be a bad idea to visit your video store and first give his films a try. If you like them, and you probably will, **Howl's Moving Castle** will eventually be on your list of places to visit.

If you're game, I'd suggest searching out a subtitled print. (Some DVDs will give you a choice.)

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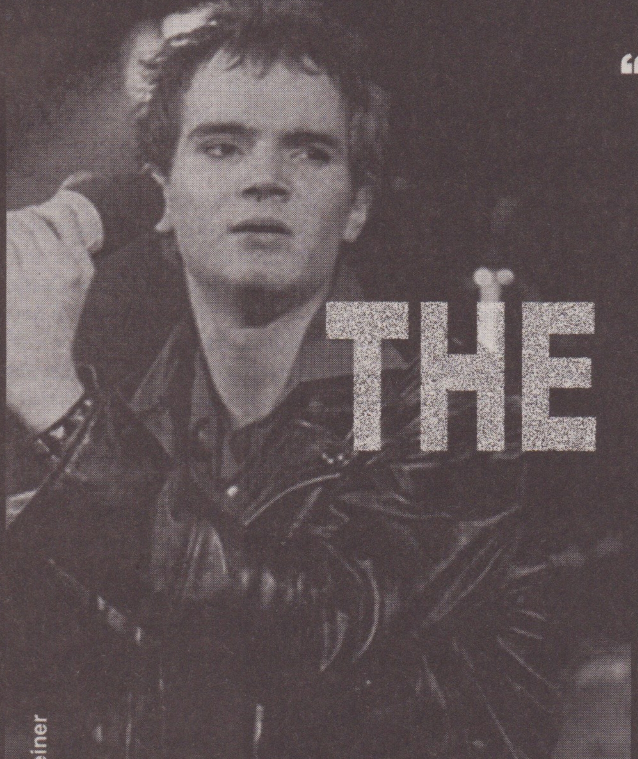

Steve Leckie of The Viletones at The Last Pogo; copyright Edie Steiner

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XYosefX (VX)

20/20 – "Going Up with My Girl/World of Fools"

I was talking about this band the other day and wondering why I just don't dig 'em as much as the UK mod revival or Canadian pop shit like POINTED STICKS, 'cos on paper it's kinda the same—syrupy power-pop with songs about girls. But sitting down with this 7", it's pretty damn great. Total ELVIS COSTELLO sugary pop. At times it all gets a bit CHEAP TRICK and the wimp factor is almost a little much, but it's hook-y as fuck, and man, I can't resist a good hook even when it's this fruity. Recorded in 1980, this is pretty sweet. (TB)
(Radio Heartbeat, www.radioheartbeat.net)

ACTS OF SEDITION / SADVILLE – Split EP

SADVILLE offers up one song, which meanders from ALL IS SUFFERING-type black metal hardcore to all-out modern charging crust and then breaks back down into loose, one-noted black metal again. Break, and then slow jams to an end. The lyrics read like a story or a poem. I'm not that into it. ACTS OF SEDITION on the other side delivers the drum-fueled mayhem that they should be known for by now considering their numerous solid releases. The music has twists and turns, which keep things interesting and kind of remind me of mid-'80s hardcore like LIFE'S BLOOD. The lyrics also make a lot more sense and are conveyed in sentence fragments similar to a lot of modern crust bands. The recording is also top-notch. I would say that their side saves this EP. (WK)
(Inkblot, www.inkblotrecords.com)

AEROPAJITAS – "Lima Enfermidad" CD

Besides the "man's ruin"-themed cover, this CD is not bad. Generic but well played rock 'n' roll-infused punk, catchy with some good little hooks. But really, back to the cover—do the snakes have to be coming out of her vag? The answer is no. (AA)
(Union X, www.xnidea.com)

AGATHOCLES / J. BRIGLIA, L. BUTLER, D. SCHOONMAKER & J. WILLIAMS – split EP

AGATHOCLES, the Belgian mincecore powerhouse since 1985, is the only band whose Wikipedia page rivals the Roswell Alien Incident in factoids and length. Fuck. J. BRIGLIA, et al., is an incredibly noisy grind band, and is from…I don't know; I don't find any information for their location. I could barely discern the music, let alone the lyrics (FYI: words are included), but I think there are two tracks. The recording is so incredibly blown out it puts CONFUSE's *Spending Loud Night* record to shame. Before they install the safety net, I'm going to listen to this when I jump off the Golden Gate. (VL)
(Self-released, mincemania@hotmail.com)

AIRES AND GRACES – "Hope And Fortitude" CD

Huh?!? I gotta be honest here and say a big WTF? Not to pass judgment or anything, but when I saw the cover for this, everything about it was misleading to me as far as the music goes—two-thirds of the band members are skinheads, all three are covered in tattoos and striking poses with arms crossed on the back cover, and the front cover is *super* "patriotic" looking with all kinds of stars and stripes imagery… So, stupid me expected some boring, plodding American Oi! music. Boy was I wrong! I'm happy to say that I was pleasantly surprised by the catchy and upbeat songs on this! In total, all six clock in at just under eleven minutes, so they are not plodding at all. And the music is fast and the guitars are incredibly crisp with minimal distortion. The best comparison I can come up with is THOSE UNKNOWN and if you are familiar with them, then you know that this band is really, really good! So my apologies to AIRES AND GRACES for my preconceived notions. I'm glad you proved me wrong! (You would think I would know better being a bald, tattooed guy myself, eh?) (ML)
(Dead End Social Club, www.deadendsocialclub.com)

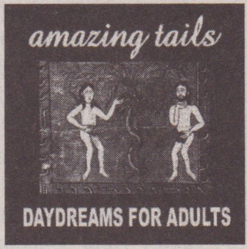
ALARM – "Chem Tales" EP

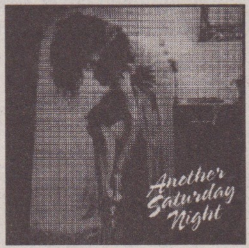
You wouldn't think much of this record by looking at it—I thought, "oh great, another US hardcore band." But wait! This is actually face-ripping grindcore! These lads from Tucson play some true dyed-in-the-wool old-school grindcore a la HERESY, NAPALM DEATH, and INTENSE DEGREE. Nothing path-breaking, nothing bad either. (NM)
(Inkblot, wwwinkblotrecords.com)

AMADAN – "Pacifica" CD

The press blurb that came with this disc says AMADAN has "created an Irish-inspired, Celt-fusion rock" that is akin

AGATHOCLES
SPLIT '08





to "THE POGUES trying to survive a GAELIC STORM while listening to DROPKICK MURPHYS." Unfortunately, AMADAN lacks the fists and fire that make the aforementioned bands great. Well, come to think of it, the aforementioned bands aren't really that great either! Whatever. Though the tunes are well played, they just have too much of a "world music" feel to them for my taste. (I mean they use a didgeridoo for fucksake. A didgeridoo! The only thing a didgeridoo is good for is taking from the person who is playing it and bashing them over the head with it!) There is one Celtic-funk abomination on here that is the aural equivalent of a knee to the bollocks (and *not* in a good way). *Pacifica* does have a few lively bright spots in "Anchor Tattoo," "Coming Home," and "Leaving of Liverpool," but overall this disc has far too many misses to warrant a decent review. (RK)
(Afan Music)

AMAZING TAILS – "Daydreams for Adults" CD

Gosh, this sounds a lot like THE NILS. I've never heard of this Finnish band before and that sucks as this is right up my alley. The material on this disc comes from 1992-1994, and now it's being released by a Japanese label, apparently much to the benefit of myself. The title of the collection (and the first twelve tracks) is an album that was recorded but never released in '94. I'm sure they were also very much influenced by HÜSKER DÜ. The Scandinavians are very good at this sort of thing, and this fits along well beside LIFE BUT HOW TO LIVE IT?, SO MUCH HATE, and DRUNK. Great melodic punk/hardcore, with a tint of indie-rock, it also reminds me a lot of Holland's great FUNERAL ORATION. This is awesome! Why have I never heard of these guys before? (AD)
(SP, 2-54-2 Itabashi, Itabashi-ku, Tokyo 1730004, JAPAN, www.sp-records.com)

AMAZING TAILS – "Happy Hour Unhappy Days" CD

So, here we have what appears to be a collection of out-of-print material from a now-defunct Finnish band from the early '90s playing music similar to Fat Wreck-style pop, a lot like LAGWAGON or STRUNG-OUT. 20 songs, 18 of which are original, plus covers of DAG NASTY's "Circles" and "Simple Minds." If you're a fan of AMAZING TAILS and haven't been able to track down the songs from their *Out* EP, *Happy Hour Unhappy Days* LP, and the aforementioned cover songs, this is what you'll need to look for in order to round out your collection. (BD)
(SP, 2-54-2 Itabashi, Itabashi-ku, Tokyo 1730004, JAPAN, www.sp-records.com)

ANCHOR – "The Quiet Dance" LP

You have no idea how happy I was that upon receiving my first bundle of music to review for *MRR*, this LP was the first thing I saw. On beautiful white vinyl, no less; I'm a happy man. ANCHOR is one of those rare bands that actually makes me feel hopeful about hardcore. Intelligent, anarchist, vegan, and straight edge—what more could I possibly ask for from a hardcore band? How about some totally original, kick-ass music combined with incisive lyrics? Check. Taking their cues from bands like UNBROKEN and REFUSED, these five Swedes have produced what may be the best hardcore record of 2008. Every song makes me want to scream along. "Every word unspoken will lead us to the gallows, and we ask for nothing more." If you listen to VERSE, SOUL CONTROL, or I RISE, do yourself a favor and pick up this LP. (VX)
(Refuse, PO Box 7, 02-792 Warszawa 78, POLAND, www.refuserecords.prv.pl)

ANOTHER SATURDAY NIGHT – "Giants of Love/Sidewalkin"

Where do I start? Musically, this band sounds to me like a cliché of a '70s NYC punk/rock band playing a ROLLING STONES wannabe brand of rock 'n' roll. Now, this isn't entirely a bad thing, as many, many incredible bands from the past took this route, like THE NEW YORK DOLLS, for one. However, something tells me that I would have been blown away by seeing THE DOLLS back in their halcyon days, whereas I would probably be found waiting in line at the bar at an ANOTHER SATURDAY NIGHT show... (ML)
(Slow Gold Zebra, POB 20506, Tompkins Square Station, New York, NY 10009)

APPALACHIAN TERROR UNIT – "Greenwashing" LP

The LP starts off with a dark, plodding intro and kicks into a full-blown crust attack that is both metallic and melodic. With the trade-off male and female vocals, this is a German squatter punk's wet dream. There is a large booklet with the lyrics to the songs as well as accompanying essays. I only skimmed through, as I am not a zine reviewer, but from what I can, tell these punkers are fired up about fascism, freeing the weed, universal health care, and miners' rights. The second side has two—count 'em, two—songs with lyrics being recited over music, sort of a crust poetry slam. Fans of Profane-style political crust punk will love this. I do not. (SE)
(Profane Existence, www.profaneexistance.com)

THE AREOLA TREAT – CD

Female-fronted punk rock that takes in a healthy dose of post-punk starkness. Hints of SIOUXSIE AND THE BANSHEES with a slight feel of TRAGIC MULATTO, all coming across as YEAH YEAH YEAH's on speed. (SD)
(self-released, www.theareolatreat.com)

ARMY OF PONCH / YOUNG LIVERS – "Live at the Atlantic, Vol. 1" EP

Without knowing this was a live recording, I would never have guessed that it wasn't recorded in a studio (except for the faint crowd noise in between songs and some stage banter on the ARMY OF PONCH side). Whoever did the sound at this show and recorded these songs really knows what they're doing. Unfortunately, I've never heard these bands before, so I don't think I can really give an accurate description of either band due to the nature of this release. If you like YOUNG LIVERS or ARMY OF PONCH, you should like this split. (BD)
(Sound Study, PO Box 2761 Gainesville, FL 32602)

ATTACK! VIPERS! / YOUNG LIVERS – split EP

Right off the bat, I'm not feeling ATTACK! VIPERS! It's some form of thick, emotional hardcore that has been done more than Traci Lords. The vocals on this recording are way too up-front and separate. Otherwise, this could be tolerable—some of the riffs are interesting and the playing is competent. On the flip, YOUNG LIVERS… BRAID-style *eeeeeeemmmooooooo*. Better than most bands that do this stuff, but… (JU)
(Yo-Yo, PO Box 920105, 12415 Berlin, GERMANY, www.yoyorecords.de)

AUTISTIC YOUTH – "Smash and Kill" EP

Shit, this is a really good 7"! This record does everything right; four killer songs (no filler), rad art all over the place, and a kick-ass insert that folds out into a cool picture. These kids play that kind of dirty punk rock and roll, sort of similar to good JAY REATARD kind of stuff. They also have a bit of WIPERS and ADOLESCENTS in their music. I'm reminded of that new COLA FREAKS record we got in last month. I liked the AUTISTIC YOUTH LP when I heard it a while back, but this record is way better. One of the best records of the month. (FS)
(Rock Bottom, rockbottomwrex@hotmail.com)

BABY SHAKES – "The First One" LP

Ten tracks of sugary power-pop with a touch of garage. This is super poppy, which suits me just fine. There's even hints of THE SHOP ASSISTANTS and THE FLATMATES. A three-girl outfit that has the sounds of THE RASPBERRIES and THE RUBINOOS all over this record. Hints of early glam, THE BAY CITY ROLLERS, with a nod to those great '60s girl groups—RONETTES, SHIRELLES—that no power-pop band would be seen without. (SD)
(Douchemaster, PO Box 5209, Atlanta, GA 31107, www.douchemasterrecords.com)

BATMAN & ROBIN – "I'm a Bat!!! I'm a Rock 'n' Roll Animal!" EP

This would be worth having just for the *byoo-*

tifully ugly depictions of the Caped Crusader and his cupbearer on the cover—as it turns out, the music within is prime stupid garage slop. With the extra bonuses of songs such as "I Feel Pretty Good While Smashing Other People" and spoken interludes such as, "Now I'll teach you a very important lesson, Robin: Metropolis sucks, Gotham City rocks," this is a better rock 'n' roll/superhero crossover than *Jan and Dean Meet Batman and Robin*, making it tied with BLACK SABBATH's "Iron Man" for the number two spot behind THE TRAITS' "Nobody Loves the Hulk" (a.k.a. "Don't Want No Green-Skinned People in Here, No"). Hearing something this inspired brightens up my whole day. (DD)
(Bachelor, 5421 Adnet 186, AUSTRIA, www.bachelorrecords.com)

THE BEAVERS – "Com' On Let's Beav" 10"

Someone needs to tell the people of Europe (Scandinavia, you are included) that the '60s garage rock revival that occurred in the US in the mid-'90s died in the mid-'90s and we've all been super sick of the same regurgitated shit since then. So, let me be that person. I'm sure I'm not the first to say it, but you aren't the first to make music like this, so, by my math, we are even. The worst thing about this is the artwork and liner notes (in this specific case, it might be the band name and title of the record). I don't understand how a band and record label today can mock the same imagery and style that so many thousands of others have used before and feel that they are contributing anything worthwhile to anyone in the entire world. There are still a few bands out there that can pull this sound off and play great songs, but what's the point? Even only a few from the mid-'90s were of any merit. There are thousands and thousands of bands from all over the world from the '60s that did this better so if you are into that sound, go listen to the real deal. THE BEAVERS are from the Netherlands and play bland '60s revival music just as bland as every other band playing this style. The record sleeve looks just as bland as every other record that looks like this. Please, please stop making music like this. Being from Europe is no excuse. Get hip. Get it? (MU)
(High School Refuse, Berlageweg 12, 9791 LN Groningen, THE NETHERLANDS)

THE BENEFITS OF – CD

This is a pretty decent album of very melodic…er…hardcore? What do you call this stuff? It's not really hardcore, nor is it punk, but I suppose it falls somewhere in the category these days. I can see these Swedes being their country's answer to NO USE FOR A NAME, or AFI, or (pick any melodic No Idea or Fat–type band from Florida). Yes, they are tight and talented, but this music is teetering on the borderline between mainstream Warped Tour punk and what is usually covered in these here pages of *MRR*. I'm sure these are nice guys and they play their hearts out and everything, but I just can't get into it. If you clandestinely dig this sort of stuff—I know there's a few of you out there in the closet—you might want to look into this band. Can I turn this off now please? (BG)
(self-released, www.thebenefitsof.com)

BLACK HAVEN – "Lazarus" EP

Where did these guys come from? Well, wherever it is, this is incredible! If you like slow, pummeling hardcore with some melodic touches, this is your shit! Imagine if TRAGEDY even had gruffer vocals, and mixed it with CAVITY, TURMOIL, and maybe even CONVERGE, with some COLISEUM and GEHENNA in there too. Must. Hear. More. (NM)
(Holy Shit, www.holyshitindustries.com)

BLACK ORPHAN – "Transmission" EP

If in search of weirdo bedroom junk punk, look no futher than HoZac Records. BLACK ORPHAN fits as a nice middle-point between the other-worldly mess of SPIDER and the cold dance-drone of BLANK DOGS. A damaged male, trapped in his bedroom with a four-track, a computer, a few guitars 'n' pedals and a whole lotta controlled substances. I'd say this guy is just a smidge off the mark, quality-wise, from the other heavies mentioned in this review, but this is still a solid single. There's a SPITS connection too, apparently. (MC)
(HoZac, www.myspace.com/horizontalaction)

BLACK TIME – "Double Negative" CD

There seemed to be some grumbling occasioned by BLACK TIME's sophomore album. I thought the songs on it were even stronger than on their debut, but perhaps it was too subtle for some who creamed their jeans over *Blackout* (not to mention that many expect, as a matter of course, some sort of sophomore slump). *Double Negative* should get those individuals back on the train, as it serves up a healthy helping of sonic abrasiveness over the course of 16 tracks. Personally, I'm going to have to listen to this a lot more, which I'm looking forward to doing, before I can actually cough up more of a judgment than "Get it," so I'll just leave it at that. (DD)
(In The Red, PO Box 50777, Los Angeles, CA 90050, www.intheredrecords.com)

THE BOARDLORDS – "Wax Museums" CD

Do you like your punk to be a brodeo of male energy? Can you relate to feelings of hating your bitch of an ex for not giving it up enough, and always getting on your case when you just wanted skate and hang with the dudes? First, fuck you. Second, buy this crappy CD, you'll totally like it. P.S. Myth of the century = blue balls. (AA)
(Volatile, www.volatilerecords.com)

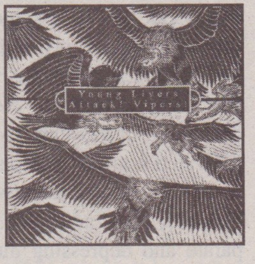
BOONDALL BOYS – "Hard Rubbish" LP

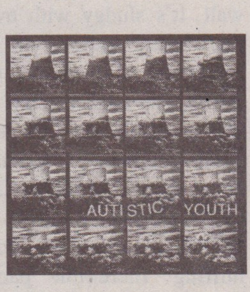
Why is it that all bands from Oz look the same? Before I knew where they were from I'd called it—they all look like a cross between Chopper and THE COSMIC PSYCHOS. THE COSMIC PSYCHOS are a good place for comparison—thick-necked, swampy punk played by a bunch of ugly old geezers. I guess the singer was in the ONYAS, which is also in the same sonic world. It's fine, but just don't grab me—just sounds like bar rock to me, *maaaaan*. (TB)
(self-released, www.myspace.com/boondallboys)

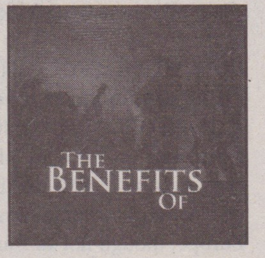
BOSOM DIVINE – "I'm Your Animal / Hangover (German Beat)"

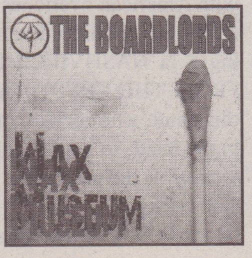
Poppy, peppy rock 'n' roll with tinges of "alternative" or "modern" rock that annoy the shit out of me. I want to com-

LIVE AT THE ATLANTIC VOL 01
YOUNG LIVERS ARMY OF PONCH









pare them to BRAINIAC, but I am afraid it is more like MODEST MOUSE or THE STROKES. The music is catchy, but I feel like I have heard it somewhere before. It's just not that familiar to me that I can easily name it. Maybe it was on a TV commercial. (CK)

(Les Disques Steak, disquesteak@gmail.com)

BREATHING FIRE – "Years of Lead" LP

Painkiller has been on a roll for a while and I'm excited to be reviewing this record. When I was a kid, the stoners and the burnouts and the drunks I knew at my high school all listened to METALLICA. That was what you listened to if you were a fuck-up. Now, the guys I knew change oil in less than 15 minutes and METALLICA has a group therapist. BREATHING FIRE would be an incredibly apt replacement for Hetfield, Lars, and gang. They play really disparate and depressing music, perfect for fuck-ups in their room by themselves staring at the wall. It's sludgy with evil riffs, it's fast with blast-beats, and it's all fronted by some kid screaming with shards of glass deep in his throat. The musicianship on this record is fucking incredible and they pull off an insanely desperate-sounding "I Wanna Be Your Dog." Mix equal parts CALIFORNIA LOVE, EYEHATEGOD, MIND ERASER, and DRUNKS WITH GUNS, and top if off with some rotten glue for huffing. Incredible packaging propels this release beyond simple record collecting—you need this. (VL)

(Painkiller, www.painkillerrecords.com)

BUD MCMUFFIN / KING AUTOMATIC – "King Automatic vs. Bud McMuffin" EP

I'm familiar with KING AUTOMATIC from his album on Voodoo Rhythm, and his tracks here are further fine delvings into the rich loam of new world swampiness as imagined by Olde Europe, though not as frantic as I recall his previous work being. BUD MCMUFFIN seems to be a one-man band dealing in further fractured reflections of gutbucket American *ur*-music. Words cannot express how glad I am to have lived long enough to see this stuff lurch towards Jerusalem. (DD)

(6 Euros ppd: Kizmiaz, kizmiazrecords@gmail.com)

BULTACOS – "Matches" CD

Do they still make Bultacos? I remember them when I was a badass on my Trail 70 as a mere child. This Spanish band plays punk rock with American overtones circa 1990. You know, a little STOOGES influence with some rock riffing a la NASHVILLE PUSSY and ROCKET FROM THE CRYPT. The only guitar player in this band, who rocks by the way, is the one girl in the band, so that's cool. Although, not as ass-kicking as the mentioned bands, this is still good stuff. (RL)

(Rock Is Pain, www.bultacos.es)

BUNNY SKULLS – "AHC" EP

A ten-song one-sided 7" of short, in-your-face punk/hardcore songs recorded on a four-track. The first track is thirteen seconds long and repeats "We are American hardcore" four times and has that raw, early-'80s sound where it reminds me as much of punk as it does early thrashing hardcore. They let you know what they think, with to-the-point tracks about straightedge being a fashion statement, prayer failing, dance music, and hipster emo, along with tracks like "I Wanna Give You AIDS" and the "AHC" one I already mentioned. Former members of VIOLENT ILL and GROSS NATIONAL PRODUCT. (MH)

(Punks Before Profits, Po Box 1148, Grand Rapids, MI, www.punksbeforeprofits.org)

BURIAL YEAR / ZANN – Split LP

This is a release I did not think was going to come out—a swan song for the almighty BURIAL YEAR that luckily found its way out of the studio and onto record. This had been planned for a while but was put on hold, I'm guessing, due to the abrupt break up of the band a while back. For those not familiar with SF's favorite sons of metallic hardcore, BURIAL YEAR was a brutal force of well-played aggression and power. Riffs as thick as fucking boards, guitars that would make you think the sky was bleeding. They had a subtle temperament to the chaos and the two originals here make one wonder how the fuck they kept it together with all the twists, turns and crushing-ness their music is/was known for. They also contribute an UNBROKEN cover, "Blanket," from the *life.love.regret* LP. It's a respectable version and an admirable job is done fusing the mid-'90s edge-core chugga-chug with their own steez. They will be missed. ZANN, on the other hand, really butchered (so to speak…haha) the CHOKEHOLD cover of possibly their best-known song, "Burning Bridges." The track comes across as pretty mediocre with the lyrics and delivery lost to the crunch of the guitar and bang of the drums. As a CHOKEHOLD fan, maybe I'm being harsh, but it did not speak to me the way a song of that magnitude should. The lone original ZANN offers on the split is a heavy, mid-tempo track that I chose not to revisit after the first couple spins. I did appreciate the song explanations they provided and was really stoked to read what they had to say concerning their song "Gotteslust" (they're from Berlin). All in all a good record and a nice gatefold package with art by Adam Hunt. (RM)

(Adagio 830, Marchlewski Strasse 107, 10243 Berlin, GERMANY)

CAUSE CO-MOTION! – "I Lie Awake" EP

Another band I've heard and read a ton about, but never actually heard. The verdict? I can see why people are talking! CAUSE CO-MOTION has a sound tailor-made for tastemakers to drool over. Overwelmingly pop, yet with a DIY hand-made jangle that keeps it interesting. Think of the early up-beat moments of TELEVISION PERSONALITIES as the chief sonic reference point. Three tunes, ranging from great (the title track) to merely OK. The lofts will be bouncing for the next seven months, no doubt about it. (MC)

(Slumberland, PO Box 19029, Oakland, CA 94619, www.slumberlandrecords.com)

CAUSE CO-MOTION – "It's Time!" CD

What we have here is a CD collection of singles released by this twee-pop Brooklyn foursome in the last few years. Taking cues from the shambolic likes of the TELEVISION PERSONALITIES, SWELL MAPS, etc. (even covering a MARINE GIRLS obscurity), their reverb-laden two-chord pop occasionally veers dangerously close to K Records territory—this is to be avoided. The party-hearty "hug life" warehouse hipster posi "we're all cool kids together" vibe runs counter to the us-against-them bedroom-revenge-song-kicking-against-the-pricks aesthetic that resonated in late '70s England bedsits and front rooms. This is good stuff for sure but after fourteen tracks you're definitely reaching for some POISON IDEA. I can't be that positive and happy. (AM)

(Slumberland, PO Box 19029, Oakland, CA 94619, www.slumberlandrecords.com)

CHRISTMAS ISLAND / LE JONATHAN REILLY – split EP

The CHRISTMAS ISLAND side contains one original and one IDLE RACE cover. The songs come out sounding a little like a lo-fi mix of the URINALS, SO COW, and the BEACH BOYS. It's more in the lo-fi tradition of something along the lines of a *Hyped 2 Death* comp track as opposed to maybe an EAT SKULL type of sound. I enjoyed both songs. The original isn't as fabulous as their contribution to the *World's Lousy…* series, but it's good. The second song "Morning Sunshine" is a totally fucking awesome song, but they don't really make it their own, and the IDLE RACE version is ultimately better. So the CHRISTMAS ISLAND side is engaging, and it's a good listen, but it has some limitations. LE JONATHAN REILLY falls somewhere along the lines of a more garagey, new wave SWELL MAPS. I never got too into the SWELL MAPS and their ilk but this is great—from the sound and tone of the guitar, to the vocals, to the way it all blends together. Good shit. The split's long sold out, but both bands' vapors are, for the most part, worth huffing. (P$)

(FDH, 2008 Montrose Street, Philadelphia, PA 19146, www.fdhmusic.com)

THE CLASS WAR KIDS – "A Strong People Need No Leader" CD

Wow! This was my first time hearing this

quartet out of Newfoundland and I must say, I was quite impressed. THE CLASS WAR KIDS mixes insightful political lyrics with super-catchy punk tunes. Think ANTI-FLAG, meets THE APERS, meets early PROPAGANDHI, with a touch of melodic street-punk thrown in ala THE BRIGGS. The band is very tight musically—crunchy guitars and rough emotive vocals. There really aren't any crap songs on this ten-song disc, but "No Shelter," "Song for the Broken Hearted," and the inspiring and especially heartfelt "Strike Back" were my faves. This is a very strong CD full of uplifting anthems ,which during these fucked up times will help you to keep your head high as well as your fists. Nice work kids! Highly recommended. (RK)
(Rebel Time, www.rebeltimerecords.com)

THE CLEAN – "Compilation" LP

THE CLEAN formed in New Zealand in 1978, and went on to be one of that country's longest-running and most influential bands, at least as far as American college-rock is concerned. They were allegedly a huge influence on SUPERCHUNK, PAVEMENT, etc., and you can certainly hear the strains of THE CLEAN in those bands' output. The band members must be well into their fifties by now, and they're still at it. What we have here is a compilation of some of their earlier singles, and it's a mishmash of styles, from driving Kraut-rock drone to WIRE-style minimalism. The overriding sound is upbeat art-pop. There's no information with this record, so unless you're already a CLEAN fanatic, you're listening blind. It's great stuff, but I'd have liked a little context. Just because Wikipedia exists doesn't mean you can slack on the liner notes. (AM)
(bootleg, no address)

COBRA – "Hits Rarities & More! 82-91" LP

This is really cool and awesome but also somewhat disappointing. COBRA is Oi! for Japan like water is for the human body. Neither would be here without the other. As the title suggests, this is a collection of tracks that span their early material; two songs from the *Breakout* EP, three songs from the *1984* EP, two songs from *The Punx* tape, and one song from the seminal *Stand the Pressure* LP from 1985. I like COBRA of all eras and think they were (actually, they're still playing shows) genius songwriters, but as is often the case, I'm more apt to put on the early records than the early '90s tracks. Also, I'm pretty sure this is a bootleg, so I'm stuck here wishing for a legit reissue of *Stand the Pressure* on vinyl. To note, there's very little information about the band that accompanies this release, though the sound quality sounds fine. (VL)
(bootleg, no address)

COREY ORBISON – "Your Name is Poison" EP

I think I saw these girls years ago during Ladyfest Brighton, and they were one of my favorite bands of the weekend. I always like stuff where it sounds like the band is in the midst of figuring out how to play everything. It starts out pretty straightforward and quickly gets weirder with lots of guitar-destroying squiggles and sounds and slightly off-time tribal drums. All three of them seem to just chime in whenever they feel like it. It's almost like if INFLATABLE BOY CLAMS was a slightly less weird and a little more straightforward. And from England. Definitely on the goofier, weirder arty side of post punk. Awesome. (MM)
(Everard, PO Box 39249, London SE3 9WP, UK, www.everardrecords.com)

THE CREEPSHOW – "Run for your Life" CD

Psychobilly that sounds kind of like that emo nu-metal stuff. It's got a definite AFI-type goth drama to it. No. (MM)
(Stomp, www.stomprecords.com)

CROM – "Hot Sumerian Nights" LP

This record starts off with a sample of "snorting." I'm sure you understand the significance; coming from a band whose CD was called *The Cocaine Wars*. The earlier CROM material was more on the powerviolence tip, but this stuff is lowbrow, mildly humorous doom-y sludge metal. There are like a trillion solos and a trillion and one samples on *Hot Sumerian Nights*. I definitely liked the older stuff much better. This record will definitely appeal to many and it's well done, but it's just not my thing. (JU)
(Blind Date, PO Box 6302, 79032 Freiburg, GERMANY, www.blinddaterecords.de)

CRUCIAL CAUSE / RAT DAMAGE – Split EP

Holy crap! This split EP featuring CRUCIAL CAUSE and RAT DAMAGE kicks some large quantities of punk butt! CRUCIAL CAUSE leads us into battle with "No Words," "Fess Up," and "Piss Ant." All three songs have snotty vocals, shitloads of attitude, and a better source of anger than those tired old MINOR THREAT records. Flip this over and you are in luck! RAT DAMAGE picks up the fucking gauntlet and takes it to a dangerous place! The menacing vocals of RAT DAMAGE rival the classic damage done by the TUNNEL RATS fifteen years ago. RAT DAMAGE starts the destruction with "Self Medicated." This song is fucking brilliant. Next up is the self-titled "Rat Damage." Excellent!!! This band just keeps getting more threatening by the minute! After being trounced by "Self Medicated" and "Rat Damage" you get the third assault: "Jerk Project." Brutal! Rough! Raw! And it's not over yet. You get eviscerated by one more tune as RAT DAMAGE drops the hammer on you with "Pillls"! Fuck yes! This is an amazing split! You must order this immediately! (BR)
(Flat Black, www.myspace.com/flatblackrecords)

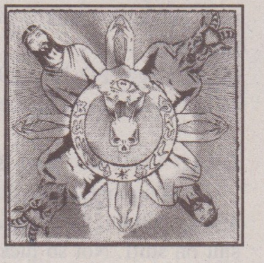
CRUCIAL SECTION / POSITIVE NOISE – split EP

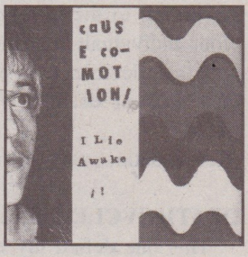
Split 7" with POSITIVE NOISE from Michigan and CRUCIAL SECTION from Japan. CRUCIAL SECTION's sound is best described as fast, bass driven hardcore with caveman vocals. CRUCIAL SECTION has a somewhat melodic sound to their songs, which almost makes it sound like an Oi! album with the pitch turned way up. The POSITIVE NOISE side is loud, punching youth crew thrash that has a bit of DRI quality to it. Also on the POSITVE NOISE side is a cover by CROSS THE LINE, who we're too short-lived of a band from the Bay Area. (PL)
(Punk Before Profits, PO Box 1148, Grand Rapids, MI 49501 www.punksbeforeprofits.net)

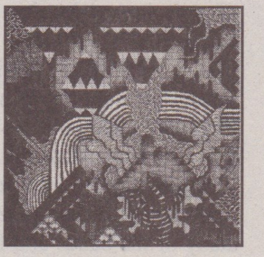
JEFF DAHL – "Back to Monkey City" CD

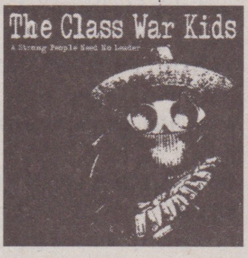
Hey, when the alarm went off this morning the clock radio (set to KUSF San Francisco, of course) was playing a song off this, "All My Favorite Ramones Are Dead." Jeff Dahl has been around since the earth cooled and his name has always been associated with rawkin' punk rock, be it

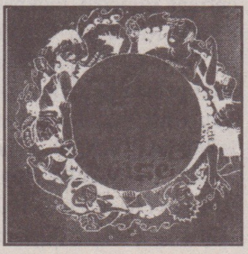
King Automatic
and Bud McMuffin








The Class War Kids
A Strong People Need No Leader



with bands (ANGRY SAMOANS, VOX POP) or by himself. This album is total pre-1977 American raw (punk) rock and roll, and this wouldn't sound out of place alongside THE DICTATORS or the DOLLS... it even brings to mind AC/DC on a couple of the rockier tracks, while other songs (especially "I'm a Mess" and "Three Star Drag") are much closer to the old ANGRY SAMOANS sound. I must say that this is quite a pleasant surprise, I wasn't expecting a lot to tell you the truth but for what this is—raw rock and roll— this is very good, and a lot of fun. (AD)
(Steel Cage, PO Box 29247, Philadelphia, PA 19125, www.steelcagerecords.com)

DEAD VOWS – "Bad Blood" CD

I was hoping, based on the name of the group and the album, for a group of ex-edger's talking shit on stuff. Not so lucky. What we do get are some Swedes playing forgettable hardcore that is presented in a melodramatic package. According to the info sheet, this project gives "four individuals a chance to collectively deal with their demons, their pains of modern life and their fear of death." Whoop-dee-fuckin'-doo! (RM)
(Refoundation, www.refoundation.it)

DEATHCYCLE – "Prelude to Tyranny" CD

This one defied my expectations! I usually can't stand hardcore that has a metal influence, but once in a while a band comes along that does it just right. Imagine throwing in the heavy NYHC elements of bands like MADBALL and SHEER TERROR with the political sensibilities of DISCHARGE and HIS HERO IS GONE, and you can get an idea of what's going on here. Sonically, I've always loved the hard-hitting power chords of East Coast hardcore, but I've always been turned off by so many of the bands and fans who have nothing in their heads. Not the case here! The lyrics are topical and compelling to the point where I read along to the entire album. The future looks bleak, and these words capture the sentiment perfectly. Definitely worth checking out. (BG)
(Lifeline, PO Box 692, Midlothian, IL 60445, www.lifelinerecords.net)

DEFEKTORS – "No to the Night/Torn to Pieces"

Agitated, minimal punk with a scratch-and-bite guitar strum. Repetitive rhythms and an overcast mood align the DEFEKTORS with current raincoat lookbackers like MANIKIN, FRUSTRATION, GEISHA GIRLS, and THE ESTRANGED. I appreciated the sparseness of arrangement and the tasteful lead guitar parts. You sense that this guitarist can really play, but is holding back in respect to the sound/song, which is refreshing. Sometimes it's the guitar you can't hear that is wailing the loudest. (AM)
(Hockey Dad, 4150 Brant St, Vancouver, BC V5N 5B4, CANADA, www.hockeydadrecords.com)

DEMERIT – "Bastards of the Nation" CD

This CD is so fucking awesome! The production values are fucking ridiculously pro, but the tunes are sugary street-punk anthems, not unlike the first DEFIANCE LP, crossed with some shitty radio-friendly pop punk a la ANTI-FLAG, but the whole thing has a really cool moody-ness to it that you normally find in fist-pumping Japacore bands, but not something your typical street-punk or pop punk bands would ever normally be able to accomplish. It's definitely super mainstream-accessible but actually, a lot of the elements here have mucho in common with something like CRUDE; high energy aggressive hardcore that sticks in your brain like a gluey mess. Did I mention this band is from China? One of the best things I've heard in a while. (JU)
(Tenzenmen, www.tenzenmen.com)

DENY EVERYTHING – "Speaking Treason" EP

It's been a long time since I've listened to KID DYNAMITE, but from what I remember they sounded a lot better than these guys. DENY EVERYTHING takes some jabs instead of the one-two punch of melody and grit that KID DYNAMITE, I guess, perfected. At first it was tolerable, but they beat this dead horse the whole EP. Hints of HOT WATER MUSIC at times, lots of melody and pop hooks while keeping a decently fast pace. Good production and musicianship, but I've heard this record before. (RM)
(Yo-Yo, PO Box 920105, 12415 Berlin, GERMANY, www.yoyorecords.de)

DEREK LYN PLASTIC – "Swim" EP

The one-man show that likes to get by with a little help from his friends has served up a tasty platter of new-wave garage-infused punk rock. Four tunes that have taken the balls of rock 'n' roll, the quirkiness of early DEVO and the sci-fi strut of THE REZILLOS. A guaranteed dancefloor filler, with enough groove and charm to make sure the pit is not sausage-factory heavy. I like. (SD)
(NMG, 1164 NE Alta Ave., Apt #1, Altanta, GA 30307)

DESCARADOS – LP

Chicago's DESCARADOS plays solid, fast punk rock with melodic guitar playing that is heavily under the influence of first-wave DC emo, especially EMBRACE or RITES OF SPRING, while the throaty vocals (sung in Spanish) keep everything well within punk territory. It's refreshing to hear those influences on something that doesn't sound wimpy or watered down. DESCARADOS reclaim those sounds for punk rock, and it's about time. This is actually a seven-song one-sided 12", as the other side features an intricate etching. The album comes in a hand-screened jacket. Great stuff. (AM)
(Emma Navajas, PO Box 207188, New Haven, CT, 06520)

DEVOUR – LP

Well, shit! This is the kind of music that happens when folks who like hardcore start to think about the music they are playing, refining their style. There's pretty much everything you would want from a hardcore record here—bludgeoning slow parts of bands like CORROSSION OF CONFORMITY and ripping fast driving parts of bands like BORN AGAINST. The singer has a voice that stands out and is reminiscent of JERRY'S KIDS, but not in a way that is contrived or done purposefully. I really like the dark tone of the music and the recording quality is A+. In a day and age when most hardcore bands are mining the sound of B-rate bands from the '80s, much like the politicians who try to mine the views of '80s figureheads, DEVOUR is a fresh and interesting counterpoint. Somehow I must also iterate that this record looks perfect as well. I really like the handwritten lyrics, which also are uniquely personal. Great record. (WK)
(Sorry State, www.sorrystaterecords.com)

DEZINFEKCE – "Psi" CD

I can remember hearing these guys on some cassettes from years back and maybe a compilation or two. These Bohemian (that's in the Czech Republic, fool) guys play a fairly straightforward version of thrashy hardcore with some metallic influences. For some reason RATOS DE PORÃO keeps coming to mind, especially with those throaty vocals! Cool. (NM)
(PHR, www.phr.cz)

DIE KREUZEN – LP

One of the greatest hardcore records ever finally reissued on vinyl. When I was assigned this for review I inadvertently felt the weight of Yohannan; if you can't track down his original 1984 review, here it is: "This is fucking great!" times a million. You could say it's the manic, shredded vocals that elevate this record, but then there's that apocalyptic guitar sound, the relentless bass… It was disconcerting the first time I saw live footage of this era of DIE KREUZEN; this record is so complete and perfect and so fucking insane and otherworldly sounding that the idea of them being a bunch of Midwestern teenagers had never occurred to me. Not that I had any specific idea of what they looked like. Or that that has any relevance to anything I guess but just that fucking sound! Total outsider psychedelic thrash; using words to describe it seems pointless. If at this point in time you do not own or have not heard this record just get it. Pure mind expansion without the chemicals. (LG)
(Touch and Go, PO Box 25520, Chicago, IL 60625)

DILLINGER FOUR – "Civil War" LP

I am fucking stoked on this LP's existence! I had no idea there was a new D4 album in the works until it showed up last week. Needless to say I've been listening to it every day since. You see, I wouldn't fancy myself a fan of pop punk, so I consider these Minnesotans to be the best act that the entire genre has *ever* seen. Beyond the inescapable catchiness of the tunes, what really set them apart from the pack are the lyrics. They have the perfect sense of sarcasm that only the greatest barstool Socrates could expel, coupled with pinpoint-accurate social commentary and personal-as-political rhetoric both as the antagonist and protagonist. As Floyd and I discussed the other day, I hold D4 to a higher standard than I do most bands, and while nothing they ever do will knock *Midwestern Songs of the Americas* from the position of "DILLINGER FOUR's best album," which is an impossible feat among impossibilities in itself, *Civil War* has tracks that I'd definitely put on a "Best of DILLINGER FOUR" mixtape—quite a few, actually. In fact, there is only one jammy here that I feel is sub-par. Just fucking buy it already. "I have only asked for honesty in exchange for blood and sweat," spot on. (JU)
(Fat Wreck Chords, PO Box 193690, San Francisco, CA 94119-3690, www.fatwreck.com)

DUKE NUKEM FOREVER / WPI – split CD

I rarely review anything at *MRR* that I just don't get/understand and this might be the first. What are WPI trying to do? Rock 'n' roll punk with a little ska? A bit arty with emo-y vocals. I almost puked when the jangling guitar kicked in, in the middle of "Bible Humping." DUKE NUKEM FOREVER, on the other hand, goes full speed ahead. Fast, chaotic hardcore with slightly arty vocals. Do these guys ride fixies or is it that I can hear the L.A. in them? Neither band really grabbed me. (MH)
(Give Praise, PO Box 494, Barnstable, MA 02630-0494, www.givepraiserecords.com)

EVERYBODY OUT – CD

It's funny that in theory this band is not aesthetically too far away from the band HAYWIRE I reviewed elsewhere, yet a million miles away in terms of content. Street-punk-lite played by ex-members of blah blah… Sounds like later DROPKICK MURPHYS with about as much content as a piece of tissue paper. Shite. (TB)
(Taang, 3830 5th Ave, San Diego, CA 92103)

LOS EXPLOSIVOS – "The Best Mexican Garage Combo" LP

I saw these guys several years ago in Mexico City and their CD-R has been in regular rotation when I don't feel like flipping LP sides, so it's a wonderful surprise to find they've finally got an LP out. I've got to admit that I'd just as soon wish there wasn't a "Louie Louie" (SONICS arrangement) included, but these kids manage to pull it off. Their snotty-ass garage punk originals in the, dare I say it?), MUMMIES and SUPERCHARGER veins are the reason to pick this up, though. (DD)
(Slovenly, PO Box 204, Reno, NV 89504, www.slovenly.com)

FAITHEALER – "Bound and Chained" LP

Crushing doom-y hardcore with dual female/male vocalists from Austin, TX. They do speed up and when they do it's wonderful chaos. The title track for example, "Bound and Chained," starts off with a lurching heaviness and slows down to a pained BUZZOVEN-type doom before thrashing away and slowing down again. This type of sound is always somewhat anonymous. Is it hardcore? Metal? Doom hardcore? DAMAD immediately comes to mind but with some similarities to KYLESA and BUZZOVEN. The band contains members of HATRED SURGE and MAMMOTH GRINDER. Good stuff. (MH)
(Inkblot, www.inkblotrecords.com)

FOR THE WORSE / KIDS OF CARNAGE – split EP

FOR THE WORSE, you should know by now, of course, and the two new songs here continue their fine track record of awesome hardcore releases. These guys have managed to grab their influence from all the great Boston and New York '80s hardcore bands and do their own thing with it. Killer band. KIDS OF CARNAGE offers up something a bit different, presenting two punk-thrash tracks of give-a-fuck attitude. Both songs are about having lots of fun with drugs and booze and barbeques because it's all gonna end some time. I think these guys are from near where the FREEZE roamed out in Cape Cod. Is there something in the water there that brings out such a nihilistic spirit? I love it! (BG)
(Give Praise, PO Box 494, Barnstable, MA 02630-0494, www.givepraiserecords.com)

FREEZE – "Land of the Lost" LP

It would be hard to unseat this as one of the greatest Boston hardcore LPs, and it greatly influenced the scene for years. Coming fresh on the heels of their crushing debut EP, this is a dissertation on the Boston HC style: aggressive and satiric, with a thick guitar sound that's both articulate and varied. This reissue comes with excellent liner notes that describe the history of the early FREEZE and the album itself. There's also cool pics and interviews, and the revelation that a coherent Boston sound may have been born from this record. A classic. Unlike the original release, this comes on cool dark brown vinyl. (SS)
(Schizophrenic, 17 West 4th St, Hamilton, ONT L9C2M2 CANADA, www.schizophrenicrex.com)

FUN HOGS – "Party!" CD

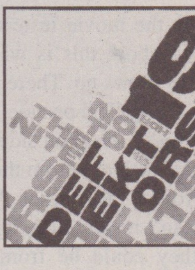
These guys have a non-political DILLINGER 4 thing going on. Maybe a little Recess Records sound too—think "party," as the title suggests. Four fun songs that, like this review, end too quickly (RL)
(BMM, no address)

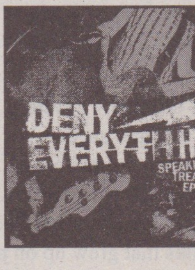
THE GEE STRINGS – "No Good (For You)" EP

This German band plays up-tempo, catchy, old skewl '77 style punk rock. It is well played and proves that you just can't go wrong with female vocals. This EP has three cuts, including a cover of "Real Wild Child," which was made famous for most punks by IGGY POP. This is a solid effort, if not terribly unique. (KK)
(Sprinter, Schwizerstr. 2, CH-8610 Uster, SWITZERLAND)

THE GERMS – "The Whisky/The Hong Kong Café '78-'79" LP

With so much great new music out this year, why would you waste your time with the zillionth GERMS bootleg?





DEREK IN PLASTIC
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DEZINFEKCE
PSI

the gee strings
NO GOOD
(FOR YOU)

Go see the movie instead. The only thing perplexing about this is why the compiler would mix the shows up. There are two songs from the Hong Kong Café on side-A along with four from the Whisky. Then on side-B five songs from the Whisky with one from the Hong Kong Café and one from S.I.R. studios. Why do that? It actually doesn't matter since all the tracks sound similar they could be from the same show. The sound quality is as you'd expect—average. At least we get to hear Darby ask for a beer one more time. Ugh. (CK)
(bootleg, no address)

THE GIRLS – "Where Wolves Drink" LP

With the success of THE EPOXIES, the Northwest seems to have really taken a liking to new wave, which is just fine with me. I don't like all new wave, but I do like when it is played by folks that grew up on punk. It's got a soul and sense of urgency that much of the original new wave just didn't have. THE GIRLS are part VAPORS, part WIRE, part BERLIN. It's time to accept that synthesizers are back. Excellent. (KK)
(Dirtnap, 2615 SE Clinton St., Portland, OR, 97202, www.dirtnaprecs.com)

GOD EQUALS GENOCIDE – "Life of Doubt" EP

The reason I got into punk rock was because of bands like this. They may not be the most accessible or coolest at the moment. The instruments make a bunch of noise and the singer screeches the lyrics, but the band has something to say and you can feel the energy and intensity in the music. You simply respect the band for getting out there and doing it and you are glad they did. It's a very similar feel to SHOTWELL. Good stuff. (CK)
(Razorcake, PO Box 42129, Los Angeles, CA 90042, www.razorcake.org)

GOLDEN TRIANGLE – "Prize Fighter" EP

Awesome! Swinging '60s style freak out psychedelic danger! This is fucking exciting. Surfy psychedelic guitars, danceable drumbeats, reverb-ed out girl vocals along with some dude drawling away in the background, which adds a weird grunge vibe to it. This reminds me of basement dance parties in Olympia where Calvin Johnson would DJ all his obscure 7"s on a weird little toy turntable. There's also all these kind of chant along parts where I have no idea what they are saying, but I wanna sing along anyways. It's kind of like fuzzier echo-y version of SHOCKING BLUE. Or it reminds me of DJ Wildman James, whose living room was full of spacey art deco furniture and was host to after parties involving his gigantic garage rock record collection. Do you get it? It's totally mega. (MM)
(Robs House, www.robshouserecords.com)

THE GREATEST HITS – "Hangups" EP

Hmm, what a dilemma I have here. On one side is a pretty cool up-tempo power-pop/rock 'n' roll song that has me very interested. Unfortunately, the B-side is a ballad. A friggin' sappy ballad and not even an interesting one at that! I think I hear some poorly done "sha-la-lalas" even? I am not one who likes to be negative though, and I prefer to see the glass as half full, so back to the A-side! Now this is good stuff! Fast and fun, and melodic and poppy all at once. I've heard other stuff from THE GREATEST HITS as well, so I know that this is what they are capable of—quality power-pop that is all the rage these days. They're not quite THE EXPLODING HEARTS, but as a fan of that band, this appeals to me as well... (ML)
(Silly Girl, www.sillygirlrecords.com)

GRIDE – "Horizont Udalosti" LP

Horizont Udalosti, or "Event Horizon" is the culmination of a lot of hard work, both musically and artistically. This LP is really well put together. It has a printed inner-sleeve and a nice 16-page booklet with lyrics in both Czech and English, along with some good live photos and posters from past shows. The lyrics are centered around darkness and introspection—a welcome change from the majority of grind bands I've heard that use fantastical gore imagery, which is both trite and boring. The music is raw with lots of energy, with musical styles molded to fit the GRIDE sound. The music is fast-as-hell hardcore grind with lots of mathematical rhythm parts. I'm not a huge fan of the grind, but I can easily tell that this is top-notch and I can respect the musicianship and overall sentiment. (WK)
(Insane Society, PO Box 18, 504 01 Novy Bydzov, CZECH REPUBLIC, www.insanesociety.net)

HAYWIRE – "Carnival Of Chaos" CD

Über-political hardcore from the UK by a bunch of blokes who have been there and done it. They have no mailing address because the cops keep busting them for direct action! This lot has been around for years and keeps getting harder, faster and more politically charged. Fast, no-nonsense punk that could only come from the Motherland—one part OI POLLOI, one part CONFLICT and the rest spike-y attitude. It's good to see in the mountain of useless shit there are still folks out there putting themselves on the line. Ripping shit. (TB)
(self-released, www.haywirepunx.co.uk)

HERE COMES A BIG BLACK CLOUD – "Pompeii" LP

The debut from this now Portland-based band is a distorted lo-fi. noisy, rockin' mess and there's nothing wrong with that. Shitloads of reverb on everything and recorded intentionally like shit by Andy from THE HORRORS. Actually, the recording is pretty good—it's the music that intentionally sounds shitty. I especially like the drums pounding away through everything. But what I dislike is that there are a million bands out there today that sound like this. Even with this band using lots of organ and theremin, it still sounds like a mix between every release from In The Red Records and Siltbreeze. Not a bad sound, but both of those labels have a hundred releases under their belt that already sound like this. Apologies to all if I'm just jaded, but I'm so bored with the U-S-A lo-fi noise scene. (MU)
(Recorded, 2440 Lyndale Ave., South Minneapolis, MN 55405)

HEY PERRO – "Summer of Destruction" CD

High energy rock 'n' roll with twin lead guitars and strong understandable vocals. Curious how they mix metal guitar with straight ahead high-energy rock 'n' roll—reminds me of THE NEW BOMB TURKS, or ROCKET FROM THE CRYPT mixed with THIN LIZZY. This five-song EP would have made a great 45. Put the title track on the A-side and the first track on the B-side and leave the last three tracks in the practice studio. The song "Summer of Destruction" is a must listen if you like rock 'n' roll, but the last three tracks left me flat. (MH)
(Belgian Style, www.belgian-style.com)

HIPS – "Backstabber / Holy Bible"

I totally thought this came out a million years ago, but I'm totally wrong and it's new, screechy, screamy minimal garage rock. I'm way into it. I've seen these kids a couple times and it's always a nice thrash out dance time. They also keep it weird enough to be unexpected and exciting. Pony-thrash punk that sounds like it was recorded in some cavernous space. Speedy girl screech and howl freak out on the first side, and then a slower dude spazz out on side B. All super good. (MM)
(Brittle, www.brittlerecords.com)

HIS ELECTRO BLUE VOICE – "Duuug" EP

Like a more abrasive WARSAW with some WIPERS-ish guitar parts... good dark wave shit! They aren't just watching and emulating those bands, they're sort of visionary. The vocals are unsettling and kind of stifling, and the delivery is good. The music itself is pretty fucking killer. For some of the guitar parts and sounds, think somewhere in the ballpark of a dark sounding outtake from a *Youth of America*-era WIPERS sesh. Really good stuff. (P$)
(Sacred Bones, www.sacredbonesrecords.com)

HOW / VIOLENT HEADACHE – split LP

It's hard for me to believe but VIOLENT HEADACHE has been around for 20 years! Yes, these Spaniards started in 1988 and have played a tried-and-true version of true punk grindcore crust ever since I can remember. True political,

anti-fascist grind the way the good lord intended. HOW is a little more punk-y, also grind-y, but more hardcore really. Apparently these guys have been around for a long time too but this is my first time hearing them. Great split! (NM)
(Parade, www.paraderecords.es)

HUNX AND HIS PUNX – "You Don't Like Rock 'n' Roll/Gimmie Gimmie Back Your Love"

My friend Ken showed me this record the other day. "Have you seen this scratch and sniff record?" I looked at it and he corrected himself, "I guess it's just scratch." Hahaha. Yeah, the cover does stand out. It is a nude man with a silver scratch-off over his dick on the front cover and on the back cover over his ass. I didn't scratch it so I don't know what's really under that silver stuff. I wouldn't want to devalue it. It's *MRR*'s copy after all. The music is super poppy bubblegum, full of bratty, semi-annoying vocals and handclaps. The lyrics are funny and sort of threatening in a kind of empowering, but amusing sing-along way. It's silly and very catchy. (CK)
(Rob's House, www.robshouserecords.com)

I HATE THIS / RAW SEWAGE – split EP

In grind we thrash? In thrash we crust?! RAW SEWAGE grinds the mind with some classic pig vs. angry bird-style vocals and microsecond metal moments with bonus magical song titles like "Ritual Thashphemy" and "Evisceration Proclamation." I HATE THIS brings more thrash to the table—short, angry, well written and raging songs. You have to walk a fine line with songs this short—distill all the fury and rage of a three-minute song into a few lines, and they do it pretty well here. (AA)
(Give Praise, PO Box 494, Barnstable, MA 02630-0494, www.givepraiserecords.com)

I.C.H. – You Won't Like It CD

Wow. This is an interesting little gem all right. It kicks off with an awesome punk rock song at a breakneck tempo that is melodic enough to be catchy. The next song makes me think SUBHUMANS/CITIZEN FISH… Then more of the same fast, heavily-accented punk rock (as it should be, seeing as how they are punx from Colchester, much like SPECIAL DUTIES before them!) Then midway on the CD we hit a bit of a mid-tempo folk-y/acoustic guitar intro a la BILLY BRAGG, which is appropriately titled "My First Political Song." As you can see by all my previous references, I.C.H. is not afraid to spread their musical wings on this CD, which is great, as they are more than capable and the results are very successful! (ML)
(Self-released, www.myspace.com/ichcolchesterpunx)

IDLE HANDS – "Gaunt But Overdosed" EP

Nice looking record—good print on cardstock, looks very post-punk. The music is total sped-up 1979 melodic punk, very MARKED MEN, OBSERVERS, WIPERS, and BUZZCOCKS. It's full of hooks, and very well played. This sound is very in right now, and these Germans (there's members of the great and punk-as-fuck PRESS GANG in here) really hit the nail on the head. This is really, really good. It has just the right mixture of melody, energy, and attitude. The EP has six songs and clocks in over ten minutes—there's value for you, though you should hurry and snap one up as they only made 500. (AD)
(Three Chords, Bahnhofstr. 70, 48143 Munster, GERMANY)

THE NATIONAL – "The Real Kid/The World Hates Me"

A quick follow up to their last 45 release, and taking the already abundant quality up an extra notch are two. Super melodic punk rock that would be way too easy to lump in with the power-pop crowd. It's got the sugar, but it's also got the aggression of early THE JAM, the punk brashness of THE CARPETTES and some of that shoe-shuffling jerkiness of THE STATUES. A perfect single that will be stuck in your noggin and every mix tape you make for months. Now please come and play the West Coast. (SD)
(Deranged, c/o Gordon Dufresne, 2700 Lower Road, Roberts Creek, BC V0N 2W4, CANADA, www.derangedrecords.com)

JACUZZI BOYS – "Island Ave" EP

As I write this, every molecule in my body (there's a lot of them) is screaming out for me to give a bad review. The name, the cover (second watercolor record cover I reviewed this month—stop this immediately), the guy wearing one of those Urban Outfitter Afghan scarves on the insert—it's all too much for my genius to tolerate. But the songs are pretty OK, even if they make me feel sorta dumb listening to it. The copy we got sent is on HoZac but it's not on gold. Who do they think I am, fried dirt? I broke it. If you wanna tape my copy back together and throw it on your terrible turntable with built-in speakers, you might say this sounds like meandering garage, vaguely ripping off the BLACK LIPS (the new DISCHARGE). (BB)
(HoZac, www.horizontalaction.com)

JONESIN' / SHANG-A-LANG – split EP

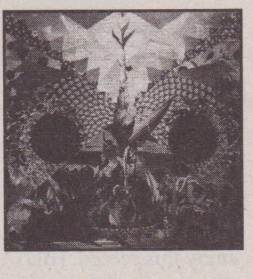
A nice solid split EP here. JONESIN' starts this one out with two catchy songs with a kind of twangy sound. I love the way the bass guitar sounds on this recording—a nice full sound, but not too heavy. SHANG-A-LANG rounds it out with some similar sounding tunes, lo-fi recording a lot like the first SEXY LP. I'd love to see these guys in a basement. I guess I'll just have to chalk them up as another band I'm pissed I missed at Thrillhouse, only because I was stuck at work that night. Damn. (BD)
(Dirt Cult, 713 Stagecoach Dr., Las Cruces, NM 88011)

JUVENTUD CRASA – "Amor En El Zafacon" CD

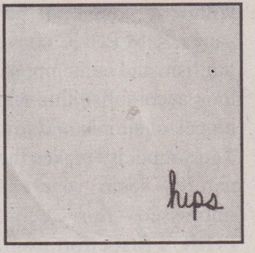
A six-song CDEP from this Puerto Rican hardcore band. Sometimes metallic, sometimes melodic riffs churn beneath anthemic male/female vocals. Reminds me of a less melodic or technical LIFE… BUT HOW TO LIVE IT? I don't know much about this band and there's not a lot of info with the CD, but the lyrics are translated into English and Japanese. The recording is competent, but the production is a little flat: with a slightly less polished recording this could have come across as much more exciting. (AM)
(Persona Unknown, 2-50-12-502 Honcho, Nakano-Ku, Tokyo 164-0012, JAPAN, www.myspace.com/personaunknown)

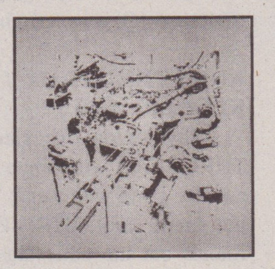
KILLER DREAMER – "1000 Years of Servitude" LP

Whoa, rad! These San Pedro dudes know how to do it. I first need to mention how awesome the cover art and layouts are for this. The cover/jacket for this record features a



Greatest Hits





YOU WON'T LIKE IT

hand-screened image of some sort of Egyptian-looking skeleton shepherd riding a giant flying insect thing, epic! The entire package is constructed in the age-old DIY fashion. At times, these songs remind me of AGENT ORANGE, but also have the feel of older Bay Area bands, similar to the earlier SHOTWELL COHO recordings. I think most people will be able to enjoy this record. (BD)

(Razorcake, PO Box 42129, Los Angeles, CA 90042, www.razorcake.org)

KIM PHUC – "Wormwood Star/Freaking Out the Squares"

Good guitar tone can be one of the most aesthetically pleasing non-tangibles and KIM PHUC dialed it on this 45. The guitars on these tracks are steeped in dirt, yet they still resonate at all the necessary moments. Two of 'em work together with the slow-burning, repetition-favoring rhythm section to create songs with atmosphere—suspense is built, relief is offered all within a couple of two-minute heavy punk songs. KIM PHUC conveys a sense of restrained nihilism and contempt for the world at large, and they accomplish this while employing the techniques of simple *and* forceful, sparse *and* heavy. The simplicity makes their disturbed, loathsome nature seem darker and creepier. I'm impressed—this record blows away KIM PHUC's first effort from a few months back and is one of the most refreshing and unique 7"s that I've heard in a while. (CI)

(Criminal IQ, www.criminaliq.com)

KNIFETHRUHEAD / STRAIGHTEDGE KEGGER – split 5"

Okay, so on one side we've got KNIFETHRUHEAD with some bizarro GWAR-esque novelty grind with a sax. Which is totally weird but kinda cool. STRAIGHTEDGE KEGGER rounds out the other side with distorted noisy hardcore, decent riffage, and good energy. Both bands sound like they were recorded on a Fischer Price tape player inside a trashcan. Griiiiity. (AA)

(Agromosh, ben_agromosh@yahoo.com)

KRYSMOPOMPAS – "Heute Schlafen – Morgen Auf Wachen" 2xLP

A German post-punk prog rock band. The music has a strange aural quality that comes from the combination of interesting instrumental combinations such as standard rock guitar, drums and spacey electronic organ with the mostly spoken vocals in German. KRYSMOPOMPAS takes their name from a German Sci-fi film called *Kamikaze 1989*, which starred Rainer Werner Fassbinder and their songs are inspired by Fassbinder's film work. If you've seen any of Fassbinder's films you can hear the influence even if you, like me, do not speak German. These could be alternative soundtracks for his films. I wish there were subtitles so I could understand what they are saying. I have a feeling it is fascinating. (CK)

(S-S, 1114 21st Street, Sacramento, CA 95811, www.s-srecords.com)

THE LASH-OUTS – CD

Curious disc from a band that encompasses elements of quasi-pop punk (of the type that diverges from the standard template) sans harmonies, edgy/nerdy *KBD*-style vocals, some NAUGHTY SWEETIES/RUBBER CITY REBELS bar punk rock (call it pub rock if you like), and... like, other stuff, you know? This might be more compelling if it was more focused, then again that might make it less interesting. Listen to it, then you tell me. (DD)

(Zodiac Killer, www.zodiackillerrecords.com)

LEADERS – "Candy Pants" EP

This could have been recorded at someone's uncle's recording studio in 1975—total budget wannabe ALICE COOPER, inadvertent *KBD* psych-storms. It reminds me of COMETS ON FIRE—driving psychedelia but with desperate undertones rather than space-rock ones. That timeless sound; could be a private-label record from the '70s or part of the new doomed underground. Little to no info about the band provided except that they hail from Portland, OR. I don't know if I woulda bought this, but I am kind of glad I got a review copy. Seems like a good record to hole up with this winter. (LG)

(Regal Select, PO Box 25646, Seattle, WA 98165)

LEADERS – "Rub You Wrong" EP

Fuzzed-out, synth-garage-*KBD*-styled two-songer from some of Portland's finest or worst (depends on who ya ask). Not dissimilar to, say, FINAL SOLUTIONS. Check it out. What's $4 anyways? (RR)

(Point Wrex, pointrecs@hotmail.com)

LEFT FOR DEAD – "Humanity" CD

Cool! I had never heard of this UK punk band before, but it says on the one-sheet that they've been around since 1996!?! It also says that they "sound like what MOTÖRHEAD might [sound like] if they were politically minded old punx instead of hedonistically minded rockers!" I'm not sure if I quite hear that myself, but it's not too far off… If I was to try to stay within the realm of punk to describe LEFT FOR DEAD, I'd say that I hear some LEATHERFACE influences in there as far as the vocals and melody and definitely a lot of the style of '80s UK bands like CHAOS UK or THE VARUKERS perhaps? Regardless, this is what I love about punks in Europe and the UK, they never seem to "grow up" and leave their punk rock youth behind. They just get older, better at playing their instruments, and put out better songs and records! (ML)

(Dead, www.lfd.uk.com)

LEUZEMIA – LP

What a fantastic treat this is—I mean, this is outstanding. I'm so excited to hear this finally. A few years back, I bought a cassette in Mexico with LEUZEMIA and some other Peruvian bands on it, but the tape was blank. It's really been worth the wait. The band would easily hold their own on any *Bloodstains* or *KBD* comp. This infectious record has a great groove… A total stomper, thrash-ya-room party-platter. It's so rad and it's got everything that makes a killer record, from the back-up vocals (*wooahhh*) to the catchy rhythms, even some weird sounding phazer thing on the bass, down to the crude drawings on the lyric sheet. I mean, how can you go wrong with a drawing of a T-rex dropping stinky turds? Can we say "next tattoo?" It's pretty rare these days that I get this pumped on a record, but this has me jumping up and down, playing air guitar and knocking stuff over, doing back-up *oohs* and *ahhs*, doing my best kicks, and punching the air. This is a total breath of fresh air, which is sad as it was originally released 1985 only a few years after the fall of a brutal dictatorship. I can only imagine how liberating hearing this or seeing them live back then was, as I live a pretty cozy existence and I'm practically foaming at the mouth, bopping up down, and smashing shit up. I'm in love with a record for the first time in ages and I'm so happy. (RR)

(Lengua Armada, 1302 Hayes St., San Francisco, CA 94117)

LIGHTNING BEAT-MAN & HIS NO TALENT – "Wrestling Rock 'n' Roll" CD

This is a reissue of the LIGHTNING BEAT-MAN 10" with three bonus tracks. Originally released in 1993, it is the record that should have instantly made him a big star, but it seems to have taken a while for people to catch on. This is BEAT-MAN at his most wild and yet most accessible. The songs are stripped-down blues with a frantic punk style. Beat-man sings love songs with a twistedly perverse sense of humor. Every song is amazingly catchy even as a stream of obscenities pours out of his mouth. This record should be in everyone's collection and now thankfully it will be. Can it be true that the song from this record "I Wanna Be Your Pussycat" has been downloaded a million times from the Voodoo Rhythm website? I'd believe it. It's such a great song. (CK)

(Voodoo Rhythm, Wankdorf-Feld-Str. 92, 3014 Bern, SWITZERLAND, info@voodoorhythm.com)

LIGHT YOURSELF ON FIRE / NADIR – split EP

LIGHT YOURSELF ON FIRE, from Tampa, FL, gives us one track of pummeling, heavy, metal-influenced hardcore with great vocals from the former singer of REVERSAL OF MAN. Hard to place their sound, it's not really metalcore but isn't far from bands like BURIAL

YEAR. It's not really pummeling noise-rock but there are moments that remind me of TODAY IS THE DAY. Throw in a little bit of COALESCE and a little southern hate and you have LIGHT YOURSELF ON FIRE. NADIR, from Massachusetts, rips through some blistering grindcore tracks. Refreshing non-gutteral vocals, not overly techie and fast. Reminds me a little of NOISEAR but somehow a fresh take on grind. I enjoyed this 7" a good bit. (MH)

($5 ppd, Tim Hetu/Nadir, 283 Alewife Brook Pwky. #2, Somerville, MA 02144)

LIKE WOLVES – "Dead Weight" EP

Adamo wrote a little note with this 7" when he sent it in saying that his biggest influence was Rick Froberg (PITCHFORK, DRIVE LIKE JEHU, HOT SNAKES), which is nothing like what this band really sounds like. He wrote that his idea for LIKE WOLVES was to fuse Froberg's sound with modern hardcore, which is something I wouldn't have really tapped into unless it was said, which it was. They do good guitar work and keep their songs interesting, they definitely are a hardcore band but by no means a run-of-the-mill, paint-by-(posi)-numbers kinda stuff. They keep it real with fast, aggressive "what the fuck just happened" parts, screamed vocals and dramatic but catchy songs...look out for these guys, I bet their next stuff is gonna be even better. (RM)

(self-released, www.myspace.com/likewolves666)

LIMB FROM LIMB – "Dismemberment" EP

OK, I will try to remain relatively calm, but no promises. LIMB FROM LIMB released their debut record about a year ago, which has remained one of my favorite releases in the past five years or so. Their variety of nihilistic, death-inspired war-crust metal, which brings together the unholy masters to the fore, is absolutely soul-crushing! BOLT THROWER, CELTIC FROST, AMEBIX, SACRILEGE, HELLHAMMER, and others are here, but LIMB FROM LIMB truly is the perfect crust/metal storm!! ARGH!!! OK, OK. There are only two songs on here, which are amazing of course, with some *evil* lyrics!! If you don't like this then remove your crust stripes and go home! (NM)

(Institut Fur Mentale Hygiene, PF 100136, 45601 Recklinghausen, GERMANY)

LOST CAUSE – "Walk Alone" EP

Aesthetically, this is a beautiful record. Cover art is designed well and printed nicely, and the lyric sheet looks great. Musically, it's head-bobbing, rocking hardcore similar to the modern sound that draws equally from MOTÖRHEAD and POISON IDEA, but their singer sounds like the guy who sang for EUCHARIST (which is aces in my book). Overall, it's not cutting any new ground, but these four songs are slick and well done. I'm going to keep my eyes peeled for these guys. (VL)

(Love the Music Hate the Scene, miskatonica@hotmail.com)

THE LURKERS – "1977: Singles, Sessions & Other Crap!" LP

This is definitely something for a true fan of THE LURKERS. Personally, there are some songs that I do really like by THE LURKERS, like "There's a New Guitar in Town," for example, but that was from '79, and by that point they had progressed musically and polished up their sound to the point of being über slick, which indulges all of my cheezy rock 'n' roll guilty-pleasures! This, however, is a collection from 1977 only, comprised of their earlier singles and various demos and sessions, including a John Peel Session as well as lots of repetition with two versions of five of the songs! For fans of *KBD* style of punk rock, this will be right up your alley! (ML)

(bootleg, no address)

M:40 – "Industrilandskap" EP

From the ashes of this charred unholy blackened world will rise a clan of dreadlocked doom warriors, with their sonic might they will awaken the dead and lead us into hell. Uh, oops, I mean, this is some brutal Scandi-crust hardcore in the vein of FROM ASHES RISE, TRAGEDY, etc. I would tell you all about how much it rages, but I think I can hear the apocalypse coming, and I gotta run. (AA)

(Halvfabrikat, www.halvfabrikat.net)

MALIGNANT TUMOUR – In Full Swing LP

Look out you fucks! MALIGNANT TUMOUR from the Czech Republic has dropped the motherfucking bomb on you!! MALIGNANT TUMOUR chooses to pummel you with eleven brutal surges of ferocious metal. Think MOTÖRHEAD with HELLSHOCK as spiritual leaders!! This shit is so vicious, so steeped in bad attitude, you may not be able to listen to the whole LP without strong drugs and alcohol acting as your best friends. MALIGNANT TUMOUR storms through "Paint The Town Red," "We Are the Metal," and arrives at "Smack The Fools." Read this vitriol: "Here we are—same as we were / Maybe less hair but who does care / Fifteen years ago you said we were shit / We are still here and you're down in the dirt." That says a mouthful! In "High Time To An End" MALIGNANT TUMOUR sings, "I am sitting in a dark deeper than hell / The world is becoming black / My armies are calling / You are already dead / Armies of darkness are on the ground." Fuck yes! These two examples of lyrical venom give you an indication of how foul, how negative, these veteran metal warriors are! This fucking record is great! You must obtain this vinyl! Long live the MALIGNANT TUMOUR! Long may they prosper! For your copy of the top-shelf metal LP *In The Swing*, write to Insane Society Records now!! (BR)

(Insane Society, PO Box 18, 504 01 Novy Bydzov, CZECH REPUBLIC, www.insanesociety.net)

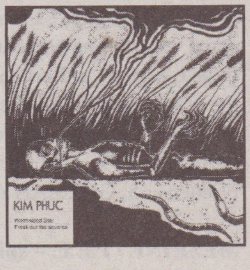
MAYFAIR & HUXLEY – "Ace Hardware Presents" EP

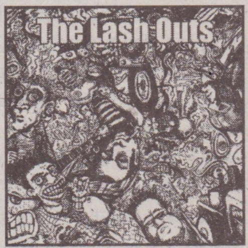
This band seems to have two types of songs: type-A is roll-on-the-floor, screaming, with drums off-kilter, and type-B is mid-tempo with cool riffs that remind me of the first UNWOUND LP. I don't know, I really liked those faster songs but the off-kilter ones gave me a headache. Some interesting guitar-work and great drumming, and the recording has a nice lo-fi feel to it, but something about this record screams pretension. I like my rock 'n' roll loose; this feels tight. Maybe 505 Levis' instead of too-small thrift-store finds will help. (VL)

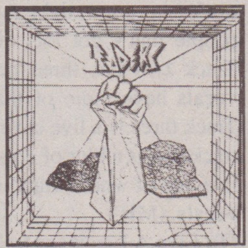
(Ace Hardware, 4808 University Ave., Des Moines, IA 50311-3304)

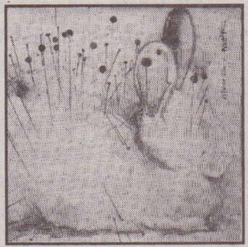
MEATLOCKER – LP

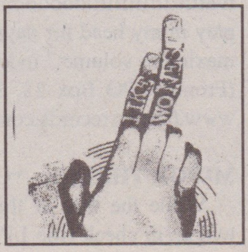
Plain ol' mean-spirited fast hardcore—it's a timeless style if you ask me. And although I consider the sounds on











this MEATLOCKER LP to be uninhibited by era, these Aussies-plus-one-Brit aren't merely mining the past. A sound this ferocious is only capable of plowing forward, aggressively assaulting stander-bys, would-be fans, innocents, whatever. It's been a long time since I've heard a hardcore record that successfully captured the essential elements of mean and fast—zealously commanding the listener's attention with rampant, quick changes and unexpected tough breakdowns, nary a frill or gimmick to be found. MEATLOCKER is not just the music of some measly malcontents, this shit is fucking pissed, urgent, and embodies every adjective of the word "ugly." This record wants to fight you, and I don't recommend resisting. (CI)
(RSR, 07819 Mittelpoellnitz, Strasse, des Friedens 45, GERMANY)

MESRINE / P.L.F. – split EP

MESRINE grinds away with a somewhat unique grindcore sound. Vocals you can understand combined with fast, non-power-chord playing. From Quebec, Canada, they remind me of RIGHTEOUS PIGS or IMPETIGO. This is ugly, dirty, filthy grindcore. Not tight, clean techie stuff. A few pig squeals thrown in and some old CARCASS sounds, in particular on "Your Life Ends." P.L.F. also grinds but has a different sound. It's not so dirty but that doesn't mean it's not heavy and raw. Their four tracks were recorded at four different times in four locations, including two live tracks. The first track is a recent, tight studio track with just two people that's got lots of metal with its grind. Track two has three people, is raw, and the vocals have more of that wet gurgling sound. Track three is a live cover of a SPLATTEREAH track that is a blur of noisy grind. Track four is a live duo of what I think is just drums, guitar and vocals. (MH)
(To Live A Lie, www.tolivealie.com)

MIDDLE CLASS – "Out of Vogue" EP

All debate aside about "first hardcore record" or not, this legit reissue originally on Joke Records in 1978 is one that everyone should be familiar with. Drop the needle and it's just a massive wave of power and speed. Try not drumming or air-guitar-ing along—it can't be done. This unleashes something fierce in one's core of being. It is a quintessential American punk record featuring two fast and two mid-paced ragers each, with killer lyrics and great vocal delivery—"growing tired of the sittitititttuattttiiiiiiiiiiiioooooonnnnnn." These songs play in my head for days after a listen. "Play at maximum volume," indeed. (RR)
(Frontier, PO Box 22, Sun Valley, CA 91353, www.frontierrecords.com)

MINOR THREAT – "Cashing In" LP

While the title of this bootleg is obviously tongue-in-cheek (the LP retails for over $20—plus tax!), it does have a bit of historical meaning as well: the live show documented herein, from April 25th, 1982, marked MINOR THREAT's return after breaking up the previous year, for which they suffered criticism in DC for "selling out" and "cashing in." Everybody hopefully already knows what MINOR THREAT sounds like (they rule) so I'm not going to describe them here, only mention that the sound quality for this particular record is pretty average as far as bootlegs go. What is well above average, for once, is the layout and packaging, which tries to duplicate the Dischord aesthetic. A nice, thick cardstock insert with relevant liner notes, a whole bunch of rare photos, a comprehensive discography of all MINOR THREAT releases, official or otherwise, complete with pressing info and reviews—it's better than a lot of legit reissues out there. I mean, I'd consider myself something of a MINOR THREAT superfan, and there was stuff I've never seen or read about before. So, while personally I'm fine with just owning the band's studio recordings, if you've *got* to have a live MINOR THREAT boot, this would seem to be the one to pick up. (CS)
(bootleg, no address)

MISCHIEF BREW / JOE JACK TALCAUM – split LP

Well this is an interesting split. You will all know JOE JACK TALCAUM from his time playing guitar for THE DEAD MILKMEN. His side of this split is OK; it's all acoustic guitar, with bits of drumming and bass here and there. It's kind of like a DEAD MILKMEN-infused BOB DYLAN. Even with harmonica and all. This will be cool for diehard DEAD MILKMEN fans, but not really all that interesting otherwise. As for MISCHIEF BREW, I thought that side kind of sucked it. The first song is a total POGES knock-off, the second song is like a BETTER THAN EZRA mid-'90s alternative song, and then the rest are vaguely DEAD MILKMEN influenced songs. But they did do a really good cover of "Watching Scotty Die" by…you guessed it, DEAD MILKMEN. This album drips with DEAD MILKMEN, but not in a good way. At least for me, and I love that band. But, I'm not a freak for them, and I think you might have to be to really get into this record. (FS)
(Fistolo, PO Box 2836, Upper Darby, PA 19082, www.fistolo.com)

MODERN DAY URBAN BARBARIANS – "Sludgemouth" CD

So judging from the cover art I fully thought this was gonna be mega horrid "funny" white-boy rap. It's not. Instead MODERN DAY URBAN BARBARIANS is super sludgy with barked out (but not cookie-monster style) lyrics and doomy whatever stuff. You know, heavy drums, kind of noodle-y super processed bass, supposedly funny ironic lyrics. There are moments where I can kind of get into the instrumentals, but then all I can think of is the atrocious album art, and then the singing starts and it's kind of ironic funny bullshit and the fucking song lasts for like ten minutes. Dumb. (MM)
(self-released, www.mdub.com)

MORDARE / RAW – "D-Beat" split EP

Barcelona's MORDARE start off with a straight-up mid-paced D-beat rager that is similar to what a band like PISSCHRIST is doing these days. I could imagine this being a ripping time live. The second song is more in the rock vein. I believe the term that has been coined is "crust and roll." A style that seems to be growing in popularity, but just isn't doing it for me. RAW from Sweden belt out four thrash tunes that sound more Finnish than they do Swedish. There is a bit of melody in the guitar and nice throaty vocals with a good amount of reverb. I wouldn't really call this "D-beat," but it is a decent record nonetheless. (SE)
(Kremon, www.kremonrecords.cjb.net)

MYSTERY GIRLS – "Incontinopia" CD

The third long-player from this Green Bay foursome, and they still look like they're still in junior high (better pray Mykel Board don't get hip to this). They still might be a bunch of spotty faced youngsters, but by Christ can they hold their own with all their hairy-holed contemporaries. A more textured affair taking in some great '60s country psych, THE BYRDS, MOUSE AND THE TRAPS, THE LEAVES, and some of the later ELECTRIC PRUNES. It's not all retro-steeped, boosting a nice contemporary NICK CAVE feel with songwriting skills that rival THE DEADLY SNAKES and THE REIGNING SOUND. The third and best, the one that is sure to elevate themselves on equal power with all their peers. I'll be playing this one for a long time and screaming their name from every hill top in San Francisco, and that, my friend, is a lot of screaming. A top-ten of the year. (SD)
(In The Red, PO Box 50777, Los Angeles, CA 90050, www.intheredrecords.com)

NEUTRALBOY / 9LB BEAVER – split EP

Ha ha ha. For real? Don't come looking for this 7" if you're totally stoked on intelligent insightful lyrics. 9 LB BEAVER played some kind of sped-up SOCIAL DISTORTION-sounding stuff. They had a sliver of rockabilly in there too. Nothing too original, but that's something I'll generally look past if they are singing about some cool stuff. But as I said earlier, that's not the case. Their only song was about nonsense—it seemed like the lyrics were written with the most attention on making sure everything rhymed. NEUTRALBOY…what to say about NEUTRALBOY? I really want to talk shit 'cause their song was stupid, but it was actually OK. It had a RADON-meets-SCREECHING

WEASEL kind of feel. The song was super fast, sloppy, and catchy. Didn't care much for the breakdown where they bring in the organ, but I think I'm just being too picky. Aside from that small bit of over-analysis, the NEUTRAL-BOY side was good. (FS)
(Big Steve, PO Box 10293, Winslow, WA 98110)

THE NIXE – LP

THE NIXE were Utrecht's first all-girl punk band, formed because they were bored after their boyfriends started a band. The first time I heard them was on the *Rock Tellen De Rollen* comp, then I heard their 7", which is *so* fucking good! They made all the covers out of construction paper with school kids (and NIXE band members) doing different pictures and scrawls for each cover. The sound? Simple, perfect exuberant punk that recalls KLEENEX/LILLIPUT with a little less dada and a different style of shriek. This record defines for me what's great about punk—the possibility and adventure rather than a three-chord rulebook 'n' enforced dress code. It just sounds fucking exciting; like it was created by a band that couldn't be contained. This compiles their 7", some unreleased outtakes from that session, their songs from the *Rock Against* compilation, and a bunch of live tracks. I would seriously recommend getting this. It's a beautiful package with gatefold LP and photos of a bunch of the aforementioned different homemade 7"s covers alongside rad band photos of them playing live, looking punk, and goofing off. Get this and start your own band! (LG)
(Polly Magoo, www.myspace.com/pollymagoorecords)

NN – "Buitres" EP

Generally, if I know a band has members of other bands I adore in them, I don't think "Oh man, I know I'll like this band, too." Instead, it raises the bar, I expect more. That said, this EP from N.N., which features Martin of LOS CRUDOS and LIMPWRIST fame, blew me away. Sure, it had Martin's signature screaming, but added to that were some really killer riffs, the kind that suck you in and get lodged in your head for days. More of a classic punk feel, with all the immediacy and charm of a band like VULPESS, but with more well crafted songs, and more raging in general. Classic sounding it may be, but there's no sentimental posturing, it's all fresh and ferocious. (AA))
(Lengua Armada, 1302 Hayes St., San Francisco, CA 94117)

THE OMENS – "Make It Last" EP

These guys are from Denver. I went to Denver once. Denver. I know a guy from Denver, Dan. He lives here, at *Maximum*, and *Maximum* by pure coincidence, just put out a record from some old band from Denver. Denver. THE OMENS, they're from Denver. They're OK. I saw a lot of Juggalos in Denver. I remember that. It rained, but it was still hot out in Denver. I have a cousin who lives in Boulder, which is near Denver. Her mother writes fantasy novels. Any asshole could write a fantasy novel. Any asshole could write a garage rock record. Always nice to get records from Denver. (BB)
(Hipsville, 2591 S. Meade St., Denver, CO 80219)

OPERATION – "Sa Lange Du Inte Gor Motstand Stoder Du Systemet 1996-1999" CD

Here is the not-quite-full discography of the late-'90s political punk band from Sweden. The CD is really well packaged, with all the lyrics, photos, and flyers that any fan of the band could ask for. To me, OPERATION was a band that really ignited the fire of politics in the European punk scene. Some would say to a fault. The songs themselves range from really good harsh straightforward punk to kind of mediocre anthems that don't really plow any new ground. I have to say that time has actually benefited this band. I found myself listening with more of an open ear because of the fact that there are very few, if any, bands still playing this style. The lyrics about the struggle for freedom still ring true. This is definitely something I would recommend to younger punks looking for an introduction into '90s political stuff. Punk is still about writing your own rules. (WK)
(Halvfabrikat, www.halvfabrikat.net)

OSS! – "King of the Thrashers" CD

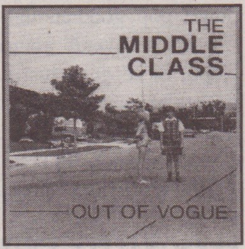
Super energetic well played thrashcore from Italy. Doesn't break any ground, but it's a fun listen. Think 625 Thrash, like WHAT HAPPENS NEXT? or a band like TEAR IT UP and you'll be in the ballpark. (AA)
(self-released, www.myspace.com/osshardcore)

THE PEGS – "Livin' at the Surf Motel" EP

Yeah, yeah, yeah!!! I didn't even *have* to do a Google search on these guys to know that they were from SoCal—it was *so* obvious, in a *good* way!! Instant comparisons to bands like THE STITCHES or THE BRIEFS abound!! This is simple, fast, chaotic, and snotty, but not at all in an annoying way that some "punk" bands can be. Complete with ridiculously easy two-string guitar solos and big gang vocals on the choruses, THE PEGS are great!! They are proof of the saying that sometimes "less is more." Do yourself a favor and get this record if you are into good punk rock!! (ML)
(No Front Teeth, PO Box 27070, London N2 9ZP, ENGLAND, www.nofrontteeth.net)

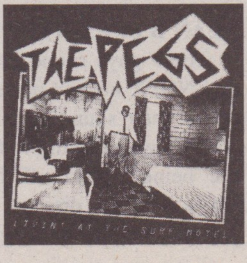
PELLINORE / SURROUNDINGS – "World Darkness" split 10"

The 10" format being a favorite warmed me up to the record probably just as much as the unique golden-brown vinyl the music was actually pressed on. The artwork is what initially caught my attention—cryptic scenes of Romanesque failure, surreal abduction and an overall enticing aesthetic. Nice. As for the music, I'll start with PELLINORE: these boys come with some serious Jersey hardcore, right up there with contemporaries like SEASICK and TROUBLEMAKER. I hear a lot of ASSHOLE PARADE in this, which is a good thing, couple that with some of CEREMONY's start/stop chop and a dose of East Coast moxie…you see what I'm getting at. They open things with an ON THE RISE-style solo intro to get things going, tough to pull off, but they get it and get you ready for the battery that follows. On the other side of the slab the listener is treated to SURROUNDINGS from Baltimore, who gives us a tough, tiiiight, heavy, and fucking pissed blitz of songs. The four tracks on this side play up the crunchy guitar and blown-tha'-fuck-out vokillz combined with gospel like intermissions/intros only to pummel you with some tuff-as-shit haymakers. Like I stated before, they use sequences between songs to create an uncomfortable atmosphere and then deliver. Flashes of brilliance here. This is a strange one, but imagine IRON LUNG if they



Mystery Girls
Incontinopia

THE OMENS
"Make it last"
b/w "Won't Be Ashamed"
RELEASED BY THE committee FOR BLAST OFF SOUNDS



grew up moshing to BOTCH (which they may have). Check this out. (RM)
(Free Cake, www.freecakefreecake.com)

PERFECT FITS – "Radio Transmitter/Songs About Girls"

Second vinyl offering from these Memphis poppers, this time on *thee* current imprint for sounds of this ilk, Douchemaster. Very clean, very poppy mid-tempo punk, well-executed and precise. Both songs are straight '79 American power-pop, good enough to do that double-take, "Is this a cover?" glance at the spinning disc. Nope, these guys just know what to do. This oughta have most doing the bedroom underwear bouncy dance in no time. Good stuff! (MC)
(Douchemaster, PO Box 5209, Atlanta, GA 31107, www.douchemasterrecords.com)

PERSONALITY CRISIS – "Creatures for Awhile" LP

Canadian punkers PERSONALITY CRISIS hailed from the city of Winnipeg, Manitoba in the early '80s—maybe you've heard them on the BYO comp LP, *Something to Believe In*? This is a legit reissue of their sole LP from 1983. I hear a strong SUBHUMANS/DOA influence in the songs, which mostly move along at a solid mid-tempo clip. The most notable feature of this band is vocalist Mitch Funk's ultra-deep voice and unique, almost operatic delivery. Can't say it's my favorite style, but at least it's distinct. While this album's got its moments, I wouldn't say PERSONALITY CRISIS ever really transcended the category of "second-tier band," and this reissue doesn't add anything—no photos, lyrics, or liner notes—to the original. (CS)
(War on Music, 333 Garry Street, Winnipeg, MB, R3B 2G7, www.waronmusic.com)

LOS PEYOTES – "Introducing..." LP

The back cover proclaims "South American '60s Garage Punk," though it should technically be "'60-Style," as these Argentines are very much of the here - and - now (THE FUZZTONES/caveman dress code is a pretty clear indication). They come up with a vital, rather than museum-piece, take on classic (Farfisa, fuzz guitar, *muchos grito*) neo-garage—not an easy feat by any means. My only gripe is that I wish there weren't so many times when the guitar seemed to be struggling to cut through the somewhat slick production. (DD)
(Dirty Water, www.dirtywaterrecords.co.uk)

PLAN B PURSUIT – "Under Your Hat" CD

These guys sound a lot like GREEN DAY and NOFX but not at the same time, which is better than sounding like METALLICA, but still it's weird trying to figure out which songs are being ripped off from their influences. Guys, let this disc go out of print, hit the garage, you play pretty good, and come up with your own sound from who knows where. (RL)
(Eunuch, 228 North School St., Boerne, TX 78006)

THE PLEASURE KILLS – "Mission Boy/Pictures On The Floor"

It's that classic power-pop formula, pioneered by BLONDIE but replicated time and time again: dress four hairy monkeys up in suits and make them jump around behind a cute girl singer. Hey, it works—if it ain't broke don't fix it. This is THE PLEASURE KILLS' second single, and it picks up where the first left off, with more three-chord pop punctuated with chiming guitars and keyboard stabs. "Mission Boy" is a tongue-in-cheek paean to the mustachioed, fixie-riding hipsters that populate SF's most happening zip code. However, it's actually the flipside, "Pictures On The Floor," that gets my toes a-tapping, kicking off like the COCKNEY REJECTS with four sugars in their tea before getting even more syrupy when the vox come in. Suitable for listening to on the AM radio hanging off your Schwinn handlebars in 1979 on your way to buy pot from the local metal head. (AM)
(Polypore, 1264 Grove St, San Francisco, CA 94117, www.thepleasurekills.com)

THE POWERCHORDS – "Think I'm Gonna" CD

This SoCal band may seem like a straight power-pop band at first but they are actually more of a less-buzzsaw BUZZCOCKS with a little DICKIES in the mix. A little light on harmonies and distinct pop melodies, but still a good band that can crank out a catchy tune. Solid melodic punk. (RL)
(Single Screen, www.myspace.com/singlescreenrecords)

THE PRAMBATH – "I Will Walk My Way" EP

Wow, THE PRAMBATH reminds me of the early days of new wave and MTV. This is really excellent, with female vocals delivered at such a high pitch, I'm almost a little uncomfortable admitting that I like it. I mean, after all, I'm a punk, right? And I don't just "kinda" like it, I like it unconditionally. In fact, I almost love it. If this record told me first that it loved me, I would definitely tell it back that I loved it. Oh, and as my friend Mario would say, it's from the mother-fucking Japan. (KK)
(Sonic Jett, www.myspace.com/sonicjettrecords)

PRUNALOGSUSAN PENTAGRAM / RAGING DICKBRAIN – split EP

OK, so I'll be honest here and admit that I invoked my coordinator privilege and assigned this to myself without hearing as much as a note. Why, you ask? Because it's got photos of Heidi and Spencer on the cover and Bobby Ray Stewart on the insert. If you don't get it, you are *so* missing out and a poseur. Now I can finally take my time and cuddle up with this 44-track (31 from RAGING DICKBRAIN and 13 from PRUNALOGSUSAN PENTAGRAM) split 7". To say that this record is a difficult listen would be the understatement of the year. What the fuck is happening? This is the most inept of the inept. Both bands! This is like five minutes of dick and fart jokes told by the noise-core version of a 15-year-old John Wayne Gacy. Fucked up talking parts, distorted toy piano or some shit...eventually, real instruments come out on the PRUNALOGSUSAN PENTAGRAM side and drop some grind-y-ish jams. All in all, Trigger-on-the-Dutendoo Records are truly in a league of their own when it comes to the way-fuckin'-out-there and this slab is no exception. (JU)
(Trigger-on-the-Dutendoo, trigger.on.the.dutendoo@gmail.com)

PUNCH – "Eyeless" EP

This band means business when it comes to their chaotic and ferocious representation of hardcore. Fast and faster blasting beats to slow droning breakdowns. Meghan's vocal are crucial and add that extra pound of power on every track. Overall, non-predictable tuneage from this Bay Area outfit. PUNCH is worth lending an ear to. (MS)
(Discos Huelga, www.discoshuelga.com)

RAMONES – "Rocking the Nation '76-'78" LP

The fucking RAMONES, man! Good sounding live bootleg from three RAMONES shows in '77-'78—King Biscuit and 4 Acres in New York 1977, a BBC recording from London 1978, and a studio radio session from Philadelphia in 1976. It also contains a radio ad from a *Rodney on the Roq* KROQ show from 1976. The RAMONES were unstoppable in the '70s. Everything was gold (yes, even *End of the Century*) and the New York shows are them at their best—right off the release of *Rocket to Russia*—I got gooseflesh listening to this. They were legendary live. I'm lucky enough to have seen them when I was 16 in Liverpool in 1987—you could say they were well past their prime, but they blew me away. It's still the loudest thing I've ever heard. When they first went to England ten years earlier they were treated like royalty by the punk scene, it's not hard to hear why. The New York shows are great quality and worth getting this for this alone. 25 tracks in all—is this necessary? No, but it's certainly nice. (AD)
(bootleg, no address)

REFUSE RESIST – "Mind Yourself" CD

The anarcho pep squad is here with poppy sing-alongs to get us all in the revolution spirit! Equal parts gruff hardcore (this is a Rodent Popsicle release) and pop punk, they do what they do well, but the repetitive choruses started to get annoying about half of the way through.

It's like, yeah, I get it, say something else now. Jeez. (AA)
(Rodent Popsicle, PO Box 1143, Allston, MA 02134, www.rodentpopsicle.com)

RICH WHITE MALES – "We Ain't No Musicians" EP

Apparently, this is a repress. I have to confess to not having known that it previously existed, which is really my loss. The EP title, which is also the name of the first song, says it all. While the RICH WHITE MALES might have you believe that they ain't no musicians, they can, in fact, play their instruments. And while this punk rock delivered with a little bit of a pop punk edge, it's very much a "fuck you" record. If you were a fan of early ANGRY SAMOANS, you should like this. Good shit. (KK)
(Cabana One, www.cabana1records.com)

ROCK 'N' ROLL ADVENTURE KIDS – "Boobies Rock 'n' Roll Hot Dog and a Jelly Roll / Teenage Caveman"

I've always liked ROCK 'N' ROLL ADVENTURE KIDS; they don't take themselves too seriously and they always put out solid music. This one is no exception and features two real winners. It's mid-tempo and catchy. It's well played. And it is clear just looking at the song titles that it is funny. That is the kind of combination that I can get used to. I'd like another serving, please. (KK)
(Bachelor, 5421 Adnet 186, AUSTRIA, www.bachelorrecords.com)

THE RUNS – "Piss and Shit" EP

Low IQ thug-thump-punk from Canada? I thought Canadians were supposed to be smart. Passable music, the sort you'd find on some nameless *KBD* rip-off compilation that is only available on CD-Rs for $6 (and turns out to be mostly art by a guy named "Fritz Cozmo"). Eschewing the often misleading internet, I called the library for information on this mysteriously-monikered fella, came up blank at first, but after the sixth call (this time I used a Turkish accent and said my name was "Dogg Strump" so they wouldn't hang up) they finally told me what I knew all along: "THE RUNS record is pretty boring." (BB)
(Criminal IQ, www.criminaliq.com)

RUSTED SHUT – "Hot Sex" LP

This is the sound of frustration, coated in NyQuil. Shards of rock riffs deconstructed and repeated until there's nothing but sludge, with vomited vocals that'll poke your eyes out. These Texas mutants have been around since the mid-'80s, but I don't think they put anything out until the *Rehab* record in the late '90s, which I haven't heard; apparently *Hot Sex* was recorded before that session. At any rate, this is music for the fucking doomed by the doomed—it's what I thought black metal sounded like before I'd ever heard any of it. It's heavier than anything Southern Lord have put out, but it isn't metal, it's more disturbing and fucked up. I would align it with those weirdo DC post-VOID bands like MALEFICE, UNITED MUTATION, but not necessarily because of the sound-a-like qualities, more the total sense of annihilation, alienation, and violence. This isn't hardcore, sludge metal, or stoner rock; this is a continuation of the Texas mutant sound, fucked up and uncatagorizable. (LG)
(Dull Knife, www.dullknifereords.com)

SANCTIONS – "Home Sweet Home" CD

Whoa, is it still 2001? Does every record out there sound like an emo band trying to emulate TRAGEDY? Come to think of it, I haven't used TRAGEDY as a reference for a while, which must mean that this sound is outdated. Not that TRAGEDY is, because they didn't actually sound like any of those bands that tried to copy them. I really don't know what to say. I just don't like the emo octave note and really long intros into ranting charge-ahead modern crust. The music is really tight and the recording is good. The lyrics are halfway decent, and the packaging is outstanding. (WK)
(Anti-Corporate, www.audio-rat-poison.com)

SBV – "Raw Nerve" CD

The first thing that I noticed about this record was how much the singer sounds like Pat Dubar from UNIFORM CHOICE and UNITY. The music portion brings to mind such bands as BAD RELGION, ADOLECENTS and what I would imagine early AFI to sound like. Overall pretty good—none of that heavy metal mosh stuff that you get from most straight edge bands nowadays and the production is spot on to what you might hear from an '80s punk or hardcore record. (PL)
(Mankind, PO Box 265, Bellflower, CA 90707, www.mankindrecords.com)

SCEPTRES – "Holes" EP

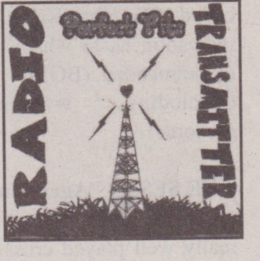
The thing that makes this record pretty good is the vocals and lyrics. Sorta sounds similar to X-RAY SPEX vocals, so if that drives ya nuts you will not like this one. But more importantly, the lyrics are thoughtful, articulate, clever, and interesting regardless of the subject matter. Only one song out of the four repeats a verse (the first song has eight verses), which is especially impressive considering these are short, fast songs around ninety seconds apiece. Not a thing wrong (nor particularly great) about the music—just your usual guitars, bass, and drums playing short, fast, distorted, catchy riffs and rhythms. (MU)
(Dire, www.direrecords.com)

TY SEGALL – LP

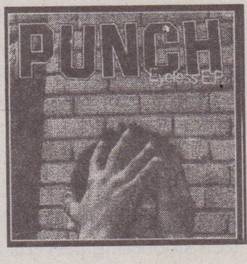
As a rule I tend not to go for the Carolyn Keddy fuzzed-out one-man-band action, but I'm digging this dude. Another local talent that I haven't got to see—this shit is low down and *dirty*. Maybe the homespun '60s thud punk of WILD BILLY CHILDISH but with some of the pop sensibilities of JAY REATARD and some of the over-the-top wildness of the COACHWHIPS. Good shit… my ears were ringing after listening to the whole album though with all the blown-outness. (TB)
(Castle Face, www.myspace.com/tysegall)

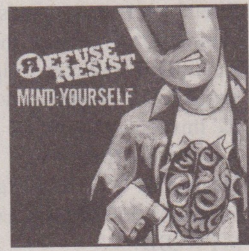
SELVHENTER – "Lillemor" EP

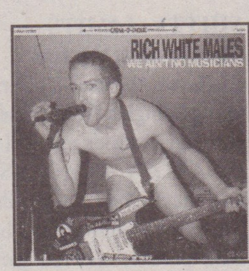
I'm at the point now that if I see that a band is from Denmark, I just assume they're going to be fantastic. And once again I'm proven right! Whereas some of their contemporaries have drawn influence form late-'70s/early-'80s American punk, SELVHENTER pays homage to all the obscure and fantastic early '80s Scandinavian bands like the ones you would hear on the Northern Europe editions of *Bloodstains* or *Killed By Death*. A nice mixture of new wave punk and fast thrash makes for a killer sound. I have no idea what the lyrics are about, but one song is



THE POWERCHORDS
THINK I'M GONNA







The Runs
Piss and Shit

called "Hardcore Rules," if that gives you any indication as to what's going on here. Highly recommended. (BG)
(Exploding, www.myspace.com/explodingrecords)

THE SESS – "Agendumb" CD

This is pretty interesting. THE SESS is like a really well played cross between RANDY and the THE BLACK LIPS with a little more emphasis on THE BLACK LIPS. So like a sped up more punk sounding BLACK LIPS with a couple nods to LITTLE RICHARD, and clean guitars and drums that sound kinda cool and blown out. The music is pretty fucking spot on… no lyric sheet but they (the lyrics) don't sound like anything special… towards the end they start to incorporate some stoner rock riffs into the jams. Seems kinda sketchy 'cause of some of the indie rock inclinations that bubble and pop around the surface. And I'm not sure quite how the imagery of police dogs attacking African American protestors on the cover works with the CD. Ultimately though, this is pretty fucking well executed. (P$)
(Single Screen, www.myspace.com/singlescreenrecords)

SEX VID – "Voyeur" EP

Snot-sniffing, dead dog hardcore from sixteen slobbering perverts recorded live (dead) in a hole in the middle of the woods somewhere in Washington, but not the part where anyone lives. Wretch-rock that sounds like dirty fingernails getting dirtier because they are scratching their dandruffed owner's scalp in wonderment, the brain inside pondering why the hell they gave me this record to review and not Layla Gibbon. Anarchist freak-folk from Walla Walla. Steampunk from New Hampshire. Techno from Botswana. Fucked Up playing in a bathroom on MTV. (BB)
(Dom America, no address)

SHITTY LIMITS – "Straight Forward/ Messin' with the Kid"

Here's the latest offering in a slew of great garage singles from these British cats who play raw and fast rock and roll punk, like a mixture of the ANGRY SAMOANS and JAY REATARD and maybe half the bands on Rip-Off Records. This shit would almost be too punk for garage rock purists, and too garage slop for hardcore punks. In other words, it's fucking good! The title track is pretty catchy, but sounds a little sloppier than some of their other efforts. The flipside is a decent take on the JUNIOR WELLS classic. I think this is a limited tour copy so this down quickly if you can. (BG)
(La Vida Es Un Mus Discos, paco@lavidaesunmus.com)

MATT K. SHRUGG – "We Can Just Lie" EP

What the fuck did I do to get all good records this month? I don't think this has ever happened before. Any rate, this disc is a "solo project" (as in "playing all instruments, doing all singing and cover art") from the LOSIN' STREAKS' trap player, and it's mighty fine straightforward garage-y rock 'n' roll with classic four-track-sounding production. Comes with a download ticket for a full album. (DD)
(Tic Tac Totally, PO Box 558383, Chicago, IL 60655-8383, www.tictactotally.com)

SILENT MEOW – CD

Bouncy mid-tempo-to-fast, poppy melodic hardcore similar to STRUNG OUT and other like-minded bands. Female singer with a nice voice that reminds me of a cross between Debbie Harry and the woman who sings for the YEAH YEAH YEAHS. The songs are well written and produced very well. Lyrics range from feelings of alienation and hate, to a weird one about an "Angel Whore." Good luck; hope you guys the best. (VL)
(Silent Meow, PO Box 40510, Santa Barbara, CA 93140)

SOCIAL PLAGUE – "A Kind of Oppression" CD

I find it hard to take any ostensibly political band seriously when they don't include lyrics with their releases. I file all such bands into a mental "what the fuck?" file. SOCIAL PLAGUE is now filed there, deep in the recesses of my mind. With song titles like "Suiciety," "Buck Fush," and "Behind Rebellion" I get the feeling that they have some sort of left or anarcho orientation, so I find it mind-boggling that their entire CD insert consists of a band photo and thanks list. Whatever. Hailing from Lille, France, this four-piece play some good grind-influenced crust, or maybe crusty grindcore. Nothing absolutely mind-blowing, but some of the songs are pretty damn catchy. If you're into SICK TERROR, RESISTANT CULTURE, DISRUPT, or TERRORIZER, this just might be your speed. I'll definitely check out their next release; hopefully it will include a lyrics sheet. (VX)
(Inner Quest, www.innerquest.asso.fr)

SO COW – "Commuting" EP

What's the deal with this? Going Underground Records have put out really good records in the past, but SO COW is dogshit. Like some up-beat BRIGHT EYES kind of crap. Three songs and all of them about girls, as far as I can tell, there's no lyric sheet and I really don't feel like listening to it a third time. Not my kind of stuff. I guess every good record label puts out a bad record here and there. Nobody is perfect. And people in a different scene probably love this guy, 'cause his songs are well made. I've just had too much of this sort of music shoved down my throat through the radio at work, iPod commercials, and that kind of stuff. (FS)
(Going Underground, www.goingundergroundrecords.com)

SONIC CHICKEN 4 – "Midnight Girl/Toe Man"

What a nice little treat this is! I wasn't really sure what to expect with the somewhat ambiguous cover and name of the band and everything, but I really am digging these two mid-tempo tracks that combine the simplicity of late-'70s punk rock with a sort of '60s garage twang. I know that description could cover a lot of things, but there's something special about these tunes that stand out. Trust me, I love garage rock and '60s punk, and I'm getting sick of all the monotonous retro bands just like anyone else, but these French rock 'n' rollers hit it just right to produce their own unique sound. Now I want to go track down their other records! (BG)
(Rob's House, www.robshouserecords.com)

STAAGS – "Adult Brigade" EP

Short and shitty snot-faced punk that is reminiscent of mid-to-late-'80s bands. I can imagine the singer spazzing out while playing a show. I bet it would be worth checking out. When I say shitty, I do not mean bad. This is actually cool. On occasion, I like this type of stuff up in my punk rock, salad-tossing face. (MS)
(DHR, dhrrrecords@gmail.com)

STREETCLEANER – "Mother Curse" EP

Powerviolence out of Austin, TX that sounds like if INFEST we're from NYC. The sleeve is your basic black and white photo sleeve and the lyrics are four-line power-violence standards, since that's really all you need to get out what you want to say—I hate when bands try to cram a whole essay into their lyrics. STREETCLEANER is pretty good and if you're a huge power-violence and sludge fan, then you should check this one out. (PL)
(Give Praise, PO Box 494, Barnstable, MA 02630-0494, www.givepraiserecords.com)

TEENAGE HEART – "Friends With Benefits" CD

A pretty unpleasant pop punk take on BAD RELIGION and maybe LIFETIME. There's a penetrating awfulness to just about everything on here, especially the vocal delivery and lyrics. The free-styled acoustic track isn't really working, but the promo shots could be worse. (P$)
(Buschrangers,www.myspace.com/buschrangerrecords)

TRANZMITORS – "Live A Little More" 12"

I think this is the first release from everyone's fave Canuck high-steppers since their LP last year, and it's pretty much along the same lines as that album—tight as a drum late-'70s-style power-pop perfection with catchy hooks galore and soaring vocal harmonies, with all the sharp edges left un-sanded. If anything, this EP bene-

fits from being slightly rougher around the edges than that album. Still, three songs and a MOONDOGS cover might not be enough to stop GENTLEMAN JESSE from stealing their thunder… (AM)
(Deranged,www.derangedrecords.com)

TRISTESS – "Hog & Lag Blues" LP
TRISTESS breezes into their third record, their most assured and confident piece of work to date. Instead of relying on a foundation of Swedish HC, these guys have a rockin' style to their mid-speed punk, bringing back a sound closer to the TRAVOLTA KIDS. "Stockholm City" is a nicely fleshed-out piece of faster punk, full of inventive changes of pace; it also stands as the best example of their style. At its best, it keeps your head bobbing with the snappy guitar progressions, even if the tempos tend to be fairly uniform. Very strong—pressed on mustard yellow vinyl. (SS)
(Ny Vag, www.nyvag.com)

TROPIEZO – "Humor Negro" CD
This thing blew me away. Early-'80s sounding dago hardcore from Puerto Rico. The CRUDOS comparison is undeniable; both scream in Spanish and are channeling the finest moments of INDIGESIT and DECLINO; however, TROPIEZO is more technically proficient and the recordings are higher quality than CRUDOS'. This is not supposed to act as a discography but a collection of songs from 2000 till now. I'd never checked out this band until now and am glad I did. Really cool shit! (VL)
(Discos de Hoy, discodehoy@yahoo.com)

TROTSKIDS – "La Complete Volume 2" LP
Fist-pumping punk/Oi! from France. Some extremely hook-ridden tunes on this here disc. Nice to have some of this stuff available again, especially since originals are hard as shit to find. TROTSKID's writing abilities definitely rivaled any of the more common names from this genre. Memorable, and I am still shocked that there were two volumes' worth. Great! (MS)
(Dirty Punk, www.dirtypunk.fr)

UNDER AL KRITIK – "Insomnia" EP
This is their debut 7" and is pretty good modern Danish hardcore with lot's of potential, but I feel they have some really bad parts to their songs. Cut out the crossover-ish parts and it'd be all right. I'd like to hear more before I write them off completely. (RR)
(Exploding, explodingrecords@gmail.com)

VARSITY WEIRDOS – "High School Teen Party" EP
Aside from having a good name, the VARSITY WEIRDOS play some great poppy punk. Hailing from New Brunswick, Canada they sound a lot like your typical RAMONES-worshipping band, think MANGES, HEAD, and like them, it's very well done and catchy as hell. (AD)
(It's Alive, 1141 Hewes St, Orange, CA 92869, www.itsaliverecords.com)

THE VERMIN – "Joe's Shanghai" CD
18 songs of dull, rawk-infused punk. No originality or brains, and the lyrics are not even dumb enough to be funny. THE VERMIN is just sleep-inducing, generic, bar punk. I guess everyone needs a diversion, so I'm not gonna judge them for playing such mundane crap, but I certainly don't want to listen to it. (CI)
(Wood Shampoo, PO Box 27801, Las Vegas, NV 89126)

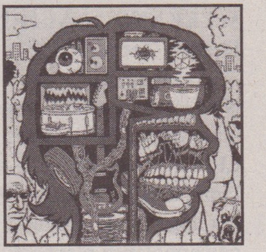
VIVIAN GIRLS – "I Can't Stay/Blind Spot"
VIVIAN GIRLS is pure pop music, not punk. Think female vocals and soft, pretty pop. Think of the early Subway releases, by bands like THE FLATMATES. Think of THE PRIMITIVES. Very nicely done. (KK)
(In The Red, PO Box 50777, Los Angeles, CA, 90050, www.intheredrecords.com)

VIVISICK – "Respect and Hate" LP
Japanese hardcore/thrash done with insane over-the-top energy. The musical style on this record is coming from the 2000 thrash camp. If this is your shit you should really check VIVISICK's *Respect and Hate* out. It gets hectic with very high-pitched vocals, many changes and layers of frantically driven hardcore. (MS)
(Insane Society, www.insanesociety.net)

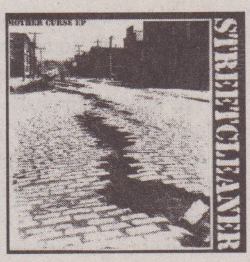
VOETSEK – "2008 Tour" EP
I've been listening to this Bay Area band for what seems like forever and when I threw this one-sided white vinyl 7" on I didn't even recognize them. The tracks are still blistering fast and thrash away but these tracks seem less metal (was the second guitarist on these recordings?). These tracks have more of a fast hardcore sound and Ami's vocals seem more understandable and restrained, and there is just something different that I can't place, maybe the production? I guess after the third listen I started to hear the more metal guitar riffs. No lyrics, which is a shame because I'd love to read the lyrics to "Ode to Porno Grind Boys." I love that the sleeve artwork is printed on the non-music side of the 7". I still enjoyed this just not as much as I usually enjoy a VOETSEK release. (MH)
(RSR, skrupel@web.de)

VOGUE – "Dickfaced" LP
The first riff of this record is the sound of a riff being played through a tape machine that is being slowed down to where it sounds like your record player is breaking for a second, then the madness begins. The majority of the songs on this record are pretty straightforward hardcore with some angular bits and odd electronic noises thrown in here and there. The vocals on this thing are really throaty and pissed sounding. I am not too sure how many there are of this thing as it is a very sparse record with not much information. Track it down! (SE)
(Holy Shit!, www.holyshitindustries.com)

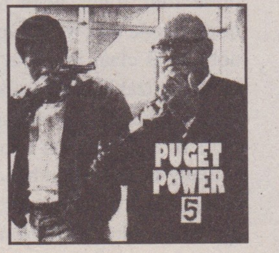
WAX MUSEUMS – LP
Everyone tells me that this doesn't sound like what I say it does so just type in "HoZac Goner Termbo weird punk" into eBay and see what some fat nerd from Saskatchewan has to say about it (he pre-ordered three). Since I'm apparently unequipped to review this, I'll tell you in absolutely no confidence that it sounds like poppy garage with silly lyrics and fairly effective hooks. Or maybe the QUEERS. (BB)
(Douchemaster, PO Box 5209, Atlanta, GA 31107, www.douchemasterrecords.com)



STAAG$!
ADULT BRIGADE EP



UNDER AL KRITIK
INSOMNIA EP



WEEKEND NACHOS – "Punish and Destroy/Torture" CD

Aaaaahh shit, muthafuckin' WEEKEND NACHOS combines their classic *Torture* EP with the equally impressive *Punish and Destroy* LP that came out last summer. If you're not familiar with the NACHOS yet, lemme tell ya, it's angry stuff. Straight out of the West Coast powerviolence playbook penned by the likes of LACK OF INTEREST, INFEST, DESPISE YOU, and CAPATALIST CASUALTIES, utilizing their speed and power, WEEKEND NACHOS has relevant and humorous lyrics. High praises have been sung in my circles of the two dudes who are at the core of the band and they get extra fucking credit for shit talking the dip-shit Steven Blush who made the film *American Hardcore*. German label RSR put this nifty digital disc together, I believe the vinyl (of *Punish and Destroy* at least) is still in print Stateside; whichever format you may find, this is a great addition to your collection and recommended for fans of the brutal persuasion. (RM)

(Regurgitated Semen, 07819 Mittelpoellnitz, Strasse, des Friedens 45, GERMANY)

WHITE LUNG – "Magazines" EP

I was into the first WHITE LUNG EP quite a bit but this one blows it out of the water. The song "Magazines" is the best thing I've heard all month. The second the initial blast of AGENT ORANGE-style faux-surf guitars breaks, the hooks have sunk in. The other thing that really makes this track is the guitar in the chorus. It almost ends up sounding like a keyboard and floods my brain with snippets of *Penis Envy*. I'm tired of making comparisons to other bands, but just imagine that album along with the AGENT ORANGE-ness that I already mentioned and add all the good (musical) elements of the first wave of riot grrrl and you've got this killer EP. Can't wait to git my hands on a copy. (JU)

(Deranged, c/o Gordon Dufresne, 2700 Lower Road, Roberts Creek, BC V0N 2W4, CANADA, www.derangedrecords.com)

WORLD WAR IX – "Brown Bagging It" EP

This four-song EP is packaged in a brown paper bag (hence the name of the EP) and has a drawing of a beer can holding hands with a hefty shot glass (who is holding a small beer can in its other hand). It's pretty cute and might be the best thing about this record. The sticker included in the package, liner note imagery, and song names also revolve around drinking. It also sounds as if these four songs were recorded with a single microphone that was dropped into a pint glass—nothing is clear and everything is distorted and unrecognizable. I sorta like that their silly name, silly imagery, silly sound add up to one silly mess of a release but I have a feeling this might actually be the worst band in the world. But this crappy record is pretty good, possibly for all of the unintended and wrong reasons. A CD-R of the same four songs is included, which was quite nice of the band, but I'll voice my personal vote and ask that no band ever mix formats into one release again. (MU)

(Red Black & Blue, PO Box 982, Vernon, NJ 07462)

WOUNDED LION – "Carol Cloud/Pony People

WOUNDED LION sounds like THE CLEAN covering *Loaded*-era VELVET UNDERGROUND—just that simple almost sweet guitar two chord rock 'n' roll. It's really catchy and has this knowing naiveté that gives me the same feeling I get from listening to the SWELL MAPS. I love music that somehow creates its own world and this does that in the best most uncontrived way. It's as charming as THE CLEAN, with the same underlying knowingness. It's hard to explain why songs that are this simple and evocative work—this is just a great 7", a double A-sider, for sure. (LG)

(S-S, 1114 21st St, Sacramento, CA 95811, www.s-srecords.com)

THE YOUNG – "4 Songs" EP

The 7" that old shiny-dome-Dougan reviewed last month suffered from being just a little lo-fi for how absolutely stunning these cats are. Had my head blown off by them live and battered the demo—of which, I believe these songs come??? I dunno, but "Attitude Adjustment" is the jam. Pop in that blown-out way that makes THE MARKED MEN and POTENTIAL JOHNS so goddamn good. See, here's the thing; any fuckwit can throw a few chords together and call themselves a band, 'specially in this thing we call punk—but songwriting? That's a whole 'nother thing. Old four-eyes Hans has that in fucking spades, man, this 7" *kills*. Mandatory. (TB)

(Criminal IQ, www.criminaliq.com)

LILI Z – "The Two Of Us" LP

Full disclosure here: Lili Z and Jack Volt were kind enough to send the initial Polly Magoo CD pressing of this album for review here at *MRR* and I lost the review in the shuffle. I checked multiple computers, email accounts, and under every rock for the review and turned up nada. Unfortunate, unprofessional, and a detriment to all humanity…but perhaps a blessing is disguise. Although my initial review was glowing, the months that followed saw my opinion only strengthen with repeated listens. Now, In The Red has graciously pressed it on vinyl to skirt the downloaders and (hopefully) open up the wonderful world of LILI Z to a wider audience, something that is long overdue in my opinion. In short, Ms. Zeller is a French punk queen, having done time in NO-TALENTS, SPLASH FOUR and, most recently, the amazing VOLT. *The Two Of Us* is her latest solo work, building off the previous singles and 10" that came in years previous. To say that it's impressive is a total understatement. Although this is one-woman electro-punk, it's a really varied album. Of course there are the buzzing crankers that cause all the itch 'n' twitch commonly associated with synth-punk, the most striking moments on the record are simultaneously playful and dark. From the truly catchy moments like "Falling" and "That Guy (Is A Real Dream)" to the ridiculous weirdo bomb-out of "Dark Toilet," there's not a single dull moment here. *The Two Of Us* makes sense—Lili can be light as air or sinister as all hell and exceeds at both. A truly excellent LP, one of the year's very best. (MC)

(In The Red, www.intheredrecords.com)

V/A – "And You'll Spin: A Tribute to Big Drill Car" CD

Hmmm. I don't really know what to say about this one. I've never heard of BIG DRILL CAR, or any of the bands on this tribute, for that matter. Some interweb research reveals that they were a pretty popular Orange County indie band around in the late '80s and early '90s. Many people described them as being influenced by bands like THE DESCENDENTS, SOUL ASYLUM, THIN LIZZY and CHEAP TRICK. I can't gather much from this without having heard the original recordings, so I will go ahead and say this: If you ever liked BIG DRILL CAR, you may be into this, but for me, tribute albums have almost always been disappointing. Pick up this CD and see for yourself. (BD)

(Itchy Korean, www.itchykorean.com)

V/A – "Back from the Dead" CD

You can pretty much always count on Refuse Records for quality (usually straight edge) hardcore. This four-way split of Polish hardcore acts doesn't disappoint. The six tracks of driving, melodic sXe hardcore here from THE AGE are surprisingly well-produced and compare nicely with bands like CHAMPION and STAY GOLD. Next up is seven songs from CRUSH ALL FAKES. A bit heavier than THE AGE with some moshy parts thrown in, but still a finger-pointing good time. Their lyrics deal with love, trust, and the like. The dudes in INSURRECTION obviously love '90s hardcore as much as I do, and I'm not just saying that because the singer is wearing a MEAN SEASON shirt in the photo—six moshy sXe songs for fans of TRIAL or 7 GENERATIONS. Bringing up the rear are eight songs from X'S ALWAYS WIN—I'll give you one guess what their lyrics are about. These were originally released as a demo, but they sound OK, just a little unpolished. Straightforward hardcore in the vein of JUDGE or BETRAYED. I wish more compilations were this good. (VX)

(Refuse, PO Box 7, 02-792 Warszawa 78, POLAND, www.refuserecords.prv.pl)

V/A – "Fists of Fury vol. 1" CD

This is a Worldwide comp CD with tons of bands and tracks! Some awesome stuff here including: MIGRA VIOLENTA, DESARME, CATHETER, FEELIN' FINE, REVUELTA, KERENANEKO, BLACK HOLE OF CALCUTTA, ZAHC, WOJCZECH, CAPITALIST CASUALTIES, and tons more. Mostly of the thrashcore variety, but also some punk-ish grindcore in there too. It's always good when a comp includes somewhat known bands with newer bands. A homespun DIY affair all the way! Support! (NM)

(Reformed, 1001 121st St. SW, #1, Everett, WA 98204)

V/A – "Good Times" EP

I was surprised to see that there are actually five hardcore bands from the UK that don't play mosh-core. This comp is a collection of five skate-core bands, and has one song each from FAST POINT, VISUAL OFFENSE, COLD ONES, SCREWED UP FLYER, and VOLUNTEERS. All the songs on this comp are pretty mediocre, but if you want to check out some fresh new bands from the UK that play a more '80s style of hardcore check it out. (PL)

(Town Clock, PO Box 132, Thirsk, Y07 1WR, UNITED KINGDOM, www.myspace.com/townclockrecords)

V/A – "Life Conception" CD

Eleven bands belt out two songs each on this eleven-band compilation that features groups from the Nagoya-Chukyo area of Japan. This CD represents a pretty wide range of styles. ACUTE, MAD GUILLOTINES, and STRIKE OUT are all true to the Japanese hardcore style. HIBIKI play super fast blastbeat-laden thrash. ETERNAL ELYSIUM is a groove-oriented doom band. ADA+MAX are horror-movie-obsessed crossover freaks. DIEDRO LOS DIABALOS and BUILD MORE SPEED rip out a very metallic blend of hardcore. A.S.K. are a UK82-inspired punk band. This compilation is rounded out with the melodic hardcore sounds of GENBAKU ONANIES. The stand-out for me was ACUTE, whose CD from last year is top-notch energetic Japanese hardcore with female vocals that aren't afraid to go into the melodic territory from time to time. I also dug STRIKE OUT's more rockin' hardcore styles. A cool compilation for those who aren't confined to one style of hardcore. (SE)

(MCR Company, 157 Kamiagu Maizuru, Kyoto 642-0913, JAPAN)

V/A – "No Side to Fall In" 10"

Very clever luring me in with bands I adore, bands that cannot disappoint, and mix them in with things I would not by any means seek out on my own. Hmph. There is no particular sound or aesthetic that unites the bands on this comp, but they are all in the same relative DIY underground scene. It includes a glorious and addictive new HARD SKIN song, the fierce and angular hardcore of THE CONVERSIONS, the compelling quirky and melodic RED HERRING, and the rest is a mish mash of noise, indie, hiphop, and a little orchestra that I will probably never listen too again, sorry, I just can't be forcibly cultured. (Mishmash includes: EMPTY HAT ORCHESTRA, GENDER FASCIST, BUTCHERS BOY, COREY ORBISON, BAZMATI MC, FAMILY OUTING, and DREI.) (AA)

(Irrk, www.irrk.org)

V/A – "Puget Power Vol. 5" EP

As I live and breathe…the return of Regal Select and their much-famed comp series!!! It's 1992 again! *Finally!!!* The *Puget Power* series has introduced the world to ROB VASQUEZ, HEAD, FLATHEAD, and countless other Pacific Northwest greats…what do they have up their sleeve in 2008? Easily the best the region has to offer, beginning with a top-notch over-and-out burner from THE INTELLIGENCE, the prolific outfit who just keeps getting better. SPIDER is up next with their first offering since their debut HoZac single. SPIDER is (essentially) Erin from THE SPITS doing one-man bad-trip punk for the drain-bramaged set…and it's leaps and bounds dirtier than most of his peers. THE PYRAMIDS changed their name to LOVE TAN for their debut on Sweet Rot, but are apparently featured here in their original incarnation. Their track is sharp and angular, much more aggressive than anything else I've heard outta them. Wrapping things up is the true find of the bunch, AFCGT, a new project featuring the combined efforts of A-FRAMES and CLIMAX GOLDEN TWINS. To say I greatly anticipated their vinyl debut is a huge understatement (I haven't shit in *weeks*). The result? Booming, freeform instrumental heaviness, tight and tortured—file next to MAYYORS in the totally fucked onslaught category. Jesus!!! The return of *Puget Power*…worth the fucking wait! Get this immediately!!! (MC)

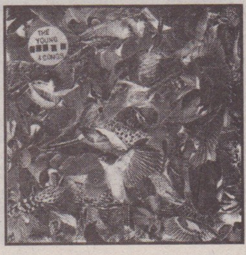
(Regal Select, PO Box 25646, Seattle, WA 98165)

V/A – "Spalte Brno Na Prach" LP

It really is about time there was a good compilation of Czech bands playing that raw style of pissed-off hardcore/punk that has given that country a good name! Brno, a city in Czech Republic for those uninformed, has some great acts and included here are a lot of them. 27 songs, 17 bands, including: SEE YOU IN HELL, MAC GYVER (duh, why hasn't anybody used that name before?), AGE OF DEATH, FESTA DESPERATO, MAD PIGS, PRIPYAT, CORE BASTARDS, ZEMEZLUC, and much more. Comes with an awesome big booklet too. (NM)

(Filip Fuchs, Grohova 39, 602 00 Brno, CZECH REPUBLIC)

WORLD WAR IX
BROWN BAGGING It



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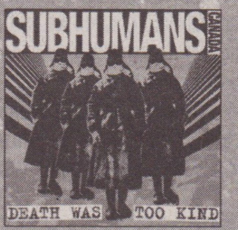

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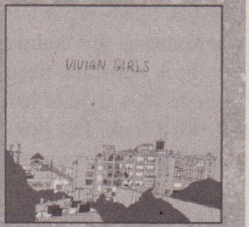

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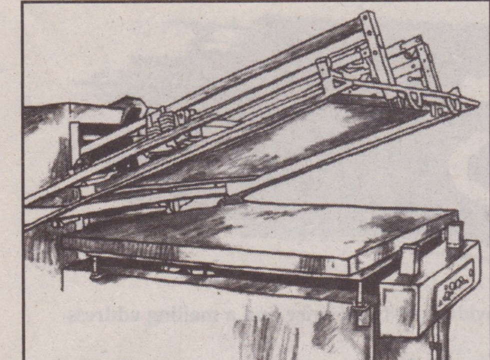

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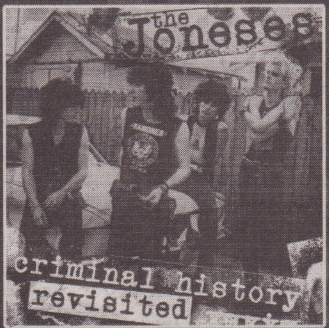
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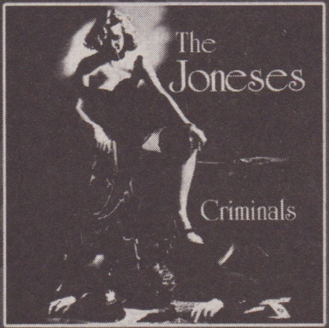
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DEMOS

Send demos and CD-Rs to: MRR attn: Demos, PO Box 460760, San Francisco, CA 94146. Please provide a postpaid price and a mailing address with your demo! Reviews by Diane Anastasio, Dan Goetz, and Vinnie La Russa.

ANTISOCIAL CLUB – Each track has a riff that reminds me greatly of something off POISON IDEA's *Feel the Darkness*, but then they throw another part into the song that just doesn't seem to fit. It's like they divide songs into parts, each of the three members writes something, then they meet for practice, and glue them together. Some great riffs on this but those incongruent moments…maybe they are trying too hard? Too many notes? Although ANTISOCIAL CLUB brings POISON IDEA to mind, instead of Jerry A on the mic, it sounds like that dude Dexter Holland from THE OFFSPRING doing those "whoooooaaas." It may seem horrible but it's actually okay. (Vinnie) (16-song CD, no lyrics, theantisocialclub@hotmail.com)

AS GOOD AS DEAD – A good antidote for fans of straightedge hardcore that are sick of the various baggage associated with "modern hardcore" and bands that refuse to think outside the X. AS GOOD AS DEAD actually has an early '00s youth crew sound and feel, like they might've had a record on Indecision or a song on the *Memories of Tomorrow* comp, and there's a refreshing sincerity and lack of pretension. They're from Toledo, and something about their sound makes this fitting—I suspect ex-LIFE SET STRUGGLE involvement based on nuances of the layout but have no proof. (Dan) (5-song cassette, lyrics included, www.myspace.com/asgoodasdeadsxe)

ASKO – Falling somewhere between the sounds of DISCHARGE and TOTALITAR, and managing to be completely convincing and killer without any need to lazily resort to the obvious musical/aesthetic indicators of either. Six originals (sung in Spanish) and an RIP cover. The insert graphic of two sets of hands playing tug-of-war with barbed wire is the proverbial icing on the cake. (Dan) (7-song cassette, lyrics included, staticopunx@gmail.com)

THE BASEMENT APARTMENTS – This disgruntled yet goofy band might bring you back to your high school days if they were spent listening to the DEAD KENNEDYS and the DEAD MILKMEN, having ridiculous fun times, and breaking curfew to go see bands with songs about horror movie characters that never took themselves too seriously. None of this sums up my high school days, but I understand the feeling and can hang for the length of this demo. The singer also does the excellent *Cramhole* comic, and this demo is somewhat of a logical extension. (Dan) (7-song CD, no lyrics, cramholecomic@hotmail.com)

BLACK BRIDGE – Totally. Fucking. Brutal. Grind. PLUTOCRACY and DISCORDANCE AXIS released a split 7", but what if they mated? BLACK BRIGADE would be the ugly offspring. Lyrics are incredibly negative and spiteful which makes this all that much better. Cool in-between song samples and I am reminded of all the *Fiesta Grande* shows I attended. Limited to 200, comes with its own rolling paper. I hope music like this is staging a comeback. (Vinnie) (12-song cassette, lyrics included, turtlexpower@hotmail.com)

BOLD SLUG – Basement pop punk with the fury and energy of all the best hardcore. BOLD SLUG simultaneously sounds like something nostalgic that you've been listening to since it changed your life years ago, and something fresh and exciting that you're discovering for the first time and is opening up a new world of possibilities. Their cover of "Hate The Police" is the perfect finale for this tape and seriously gives the original a run for its money, which is of course an incredibly bold statement, but one I will stand behind. You need this. (Dan) (7-song cassette, lyrics included, PO Box 265, Athens, GA 30603)

BRICKBURNER – Brickburner plays industrial-influenced music that draws on the long slow jams of their post-punk predecessors. Their songs are packed with drones and repetitive beats with dashes of the psychedelia thrown in for good measure. This demo mixes the sounds of what may be a didgeridoo with keyboards, over-distorted guitars and melodic vocals, with quite a few tracks clocking in at over four minutes. The back of the CD has a picture of astronauts approaching a launch pad, which fits their spacey sound quite well...and the insert displays a giant earth that says, "the future doesn't need us" across it. Heavy shit. (Diane) (13-song CD, no lyrics included, www.brickburner.net)

BURNT CROSS – Melodic UK anarcho/political punk with a modern sound, though not nearly as contrived as this might suggest. Many of the songs here are slower and with relatively eclectic songwriting, including some non-punk pop moments that are actually decent, though these songs could make the same point in about half the time. The faster ones are more generic and don't hold my attention so much. (Dan) (10-song cassette, no lyrics, www.myspace.com/burntcross)

THE COREVARES – All over the place on this one. THE COREVARES remind me of SCREECHING WEASEL, THE CLASH, and at times, DINOSAUR JR, but with less whine. Old dudes playing punk rock, more likely to be at the bar than the all-ages club. Songs range in theme to, "why doesn't my wife clean the dishes while I'm at work," and "my ears hurt and I've been doing this for damn too long." (Vinnie) (14-song CD, no lyrics, www.myspace.com/thecorevares)

EMPTY VESSEL – Lately I feel like there's been a media influx of whiny bullshit to the ol' *MRR* compound. *Where's the 'core?* EMPTY VESSEL heard my call and sent in this plastic slab of goodness. It's fast and heavy, kind of sloppy and noisy, it's DIY, and I totally like it. Four-track recording of songs with personality, not trying to emulate LIP CREAM or POISON IDEA or ANTI-CIMEX, but still playing raw HC. All songs are under a minute except for one—10 songs at 7:46! It's dark and primal, reminding me of black-metal sensation BONE AWL, but substitute Satan for heavy breakdowns, and add the spastic insanity of FAT DAY, and the first NEUROSIS LP thrown in the blender. (Vinnie) (10-song CD, lyrics included, 6910 SE 62nd Ave, Portland, OR, 97206)

EVICTION PARTY – Raspy, off-key vocals over heartsick pop punk songs of the CRIMPSHRINE persuasion. The lyrics are straight out of the personal zine of someone who drinks too much coffee and terminally dreams of hitting the road again because things in their current place aren't quite the way they were or should be. (Dan) (12-song CD, lyrics included, PO Box 31224, Halifax, NS, B3K 5Y1, CANADA)

GLUE – This is really confusing. It sounds like they sent in a mix-tape of a record of their band. *However*, the record skips, horribly, and the tape they used was eaten, wound up, then eaten again. The sound goes from normal volume, to no volume, to normal volume, and back to nothing a few times per song. From what I can decipher—female singer fronting your basic punk band. Makes me think of DEATHWISH KIDS or THIS IS MY FIST!, but fewer fast songs and less personality. My interest is piqued, but can't tell what the hell is happening. Guys/Gals you don't have to spring the big bucks for the recording? That's fine. But, the $1.50 for a new tape? Please pay. (Vinnie) (6-song cassette, lyrics included, PO Box 7302, Olympia, WA 98507)

GSD – GSD comes out of the Long Island tradition of hardcore merged with pop punk. The guitarist throws in some fills and solo parts amidst basic hardcore breakdowns and short, spastic palm-muting sessions. They have more of a political bent with their lyrics and discuss the end of the world in their first track, "Crucified." It seems like they're really trying to keep their music interesting and new by adding weird guitar parts, by switching up the shouting vocals, and by not sticking to a deadening chorus-verse arrangement. (Diane) (6-song CD, no lyrics included, imanlamb@yahoo.com)

LOVELY LADS – Straightforward street punk from Boston. Songs are catchy and written well. Lyrics are not of the happy sort—loads of frustration is funneled through the mic. Musically they're real similar to THE WRETCHED ONES. This band, more or less, has since restarted as RIVAL MOB and sounds like BREAKDOWN. Covers of ROSE TATTOO ("I Had You First") and SKREWDRIVER, off of *All Skrewed Up*, ("Mr. 9 to 5"). (Vinnie) (10-song demo, no lyrics, www.eatingrats.com)

MANVILLE – I've seen this band a number of times now and none of their recordings have lived up to their live show, though this one does a pretty good job. Last time they were in town they had a dude singer, but the time before they had a chick singer, and I liked the chick more, and these recordings have a female singer, so…yeah, I'm stoked. Musically, MANVILLE is incredibly tight and plays unique mid-tempo and melodic HC. They're good friends with LOVE SONGS and both of them are an influence on the other. At time it reminds me of a more straightforward DRIVE LIKE JEHU, including the intricate guitar lines and singer's style. Though to note, DRIVE LIKE JEHU would never title a CD *Potty Animalz*. (Vinnie) (11-song CD, no lyrics, #10 Records, 2218 N 34th St, Boise, ID 83703)

THE MINDLESS SHOW – The AT THE DRIVE IN phenomenon runs a lot deeper than I thought. These guys hail from Malaysia and sound a lot like those dudes. THE MINDLESS SHOW plays a certain *mature* brand of HC that was perfected well during the '90s. These guys seem incredibly talented and the songs are most often mid-tempo, but have some slower rockers that remind me of STRAWMAN. The standout happened to be the quickest and also the last track. I kept hitting repeat to hear just that song. Songs are sung in English except for one, which has a long intro and, I'm guessing, sung in Malay. Lyrics employ the "personal is political" format. I'm into this and hope great things for these guys. Really cool packaging and music makes this a great demo. (Vinnie) (4-song CD, lyrics included, biteyourass@hotmail.com)

THE QUASI-MEN – This demo's cover features the silhouette of a hand in a burning flame with a pentagram on it. The song titles and cover art are darker than the music that THE QUASI-MEN delivers, however, as they dabble in some surfy riffs and generally stay on the more poppy side of things. They play mid-tempo driving punk songs in the vein of the MISFITS and MURDER CITY DEVILS, and some songs include the harmonies of a keyboard. This demo features such gems as "I Wanna Knock Up Elvira" and "I Was a Teenage Ax Murdering Cannibal." (Diane) (15-song CD, no lyrics included, www.myspace.com/thequasimen)

PANTYHOSE – All-girl teenage punk that could be described as "primitive" in terms of both recording quality, and "punk band just starting to play faster" speed, sound, and even riffs. Well-crafted songs that presently lack the bite and kick to be truly captivating, but I could see PANTYHOSE getting really good and future fans seeking out these songs to hear where they got their start. (Dan) (3-song cassette, no lyrics, www.myspace.com/pantyhoseband)

PARASITESGO! – I got this two months ago and have been listening to it non-stop. It's just totally out of this fucking world. This is definitely recommended if you have even an infinitesimal interest in CRIMPSHRINE, FIFTEEN, MONSULA, GREEN DAY, or anything late-'80s Gilman-related. These guys have resurrected the long-lost East-Bay, pop punk sound! Each song is catchy as hell and sticks with you. The drums drive the songs—they are all over the place. By listen number two I was banging them out on the steering wheel as I drove around town. CRIMPSHRINE is an obvious influence, the singer has a real raspy voice a la Jeff Ott, but he's got a bit more personality and twang. If there's ever a non-cable access sitcom on primetime television I would suggest to the producers they use song number five, "Cleanin' Out My Head" to close out the show and roll the credits. Each song is incredible, but my favorite was "Rejection." Perfect mix-tape material for the sweetheart of your choice. PARASITES GO!, where were you 15 years ago? I could have used at least half of these songs on those I pursued and never caught. In my oh-so-humble opinion, this thing is fucking flawless. (Vinnie) (6-song cassette, lyrics included, $2 or $3 to 99 Van Ripper Lane, Orinda, CA 94563)

PLANETARY RUINS – Totally thrown off by this one; never trust a book…etc. The band calls this the "Fun Core" demo—I was expecting crappy pop—but leads off with an UNHOLY GRAVE cover and later a HEALTH HAZARD song. Fucking weird. The rest of the songs have a strong metallic influence to them, and most are slower with a female singing the high parts and a male singing the guttural low parts. The songs with blast beats sound like they need some practice; the blast doesn't seem to be totally managed. But in general, lots of metallic riffage, palm muting, and harmonic tweaks—the guitar is definitely my favorite part of this! Included on the disc are two different recording sessions and a few songs live on the UC Davis radio station. This is decent, but get those drums up to par and this band will be a terror. (Vinnie) (21-song CD, no lyrics, no address)

POOP ON JESUS – With an insert that gives such practical political advice as "kill god," "smear shit on [sic] cross," and "beat up people who eat animals" as well as misspelling "Tofutti" and "hegemony," it's a no-brainer that these kids take their politics as seriously as their choice of band name. The drums sound like tin cans, the guitar sounds like a practice amp with the gain turned up to ten, and the vocals sound like NOFX with throat cancer. (Dan) (6-song CD, lyrics included, georgewillpay@hotmail.com)

RANDOM NOISE – BAD RELIGION comes to town and where are these guys…*you betcha*, front row. RANDOM NOISE moves from mid-tempo to fast melodic HC. Songs are put together well and playing is great, though a bit contrived. They definitely wear their influences on their sleeve. Lyrics range from taking a trip to the local skate shop to being a poor college student and drinking Steel Reserve. (Vinnie) (11-song CD, lyrics included, randomnoisepunk@yahoo.com)

RATIONS – Mid-tempo and melodic punk a la SCREECHING WEASEL, FACE TO FACE, or WHISKEY SUNDAY. Every song reminds me of SCREECHING WEASEL's "El Mezote" off of the split with BORN AGAINST. Some hooks to the songs but they're similar to other hooks that have grabbed me before. Drumming is a little off; needs to get his/her chops up for the next recording. They cover a KRUPTED PEASANT FARMERZ song. (Vinnie) (5-song CD, no lyrics, wells.tipley@gmail.com)

RIFF RAFF – There has to be millions…fine, hundreds of bands with the name RIFF RAFF, and there sure as shit is a number of bands playing Youthcrew '88 HC, but fuck me do these guys kick ass. Songs are written well, production is awesome, and I'm totally stoked on this. Fans of JUDGE, YOUTH OF TODAY, etc take note. (Vinnie) (5-song cassette, lyrics included, riffraff@eatingrats.com)

THE STIMPLETONS – These Ohio youngsters play faster RAMONES-style pop punk with upbeat four-chord guitar riffs and simple bass lines. The crooning vocals are deep and gruff and the singer doesn't hesitate to throw in a long, drawn-out "whoa" every now and then. The faster songs are catchy, but I could do without their ode to Irish drinking songs ("Tavern Song"). There are even a couple of covers of the RAMONES and the UK SUBS at the tail end to round things out. (Diane) (10-song CD, no lyrics included)

SURRENDER – A document, testimony, of these peace-punks performing at 924 Gilman St in August of 2007. Sound quality is great despite being a live recording, but packaging is what pushes this over the top. Who does a foldout cover for a cassette? Masked anarchists, that's who. Aesthetically this thing is beautiful. Musically they remind me of a cross between CRASS (duh) and GANG OF FOUR, mostly the latter due to the rambling bass lines. Hand numbered and limited to 200. Exceptional release! (Vinnie) (9-song cassette, no lyrics, $5 from Five Ten, PO Box 22083, Oakland, CA 94623)

VAMPIRE LESBIANS OF SODOM – I was expecting some goth bullshit but this blew me away. Tough and gruff HC a la THE FIXTURES from Germany. Sounds like two different singers, one of which distinctly reminds me of David Thomas from PERE UBU(!!!), though nothing edgy or experimental about these guys, outside of the odd mismatch of a name. Faster songs are more interesting—riffs are decent—slower, mid-tempo songs seem to plod along, but the slow song with the vocals, guitar, and bongos introduction should really go. (Vinnie) (13-song CD, no lyrics, info@vampire-lesbians.com)

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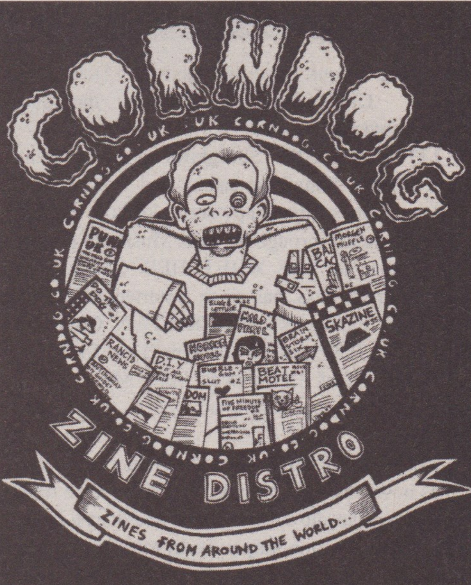

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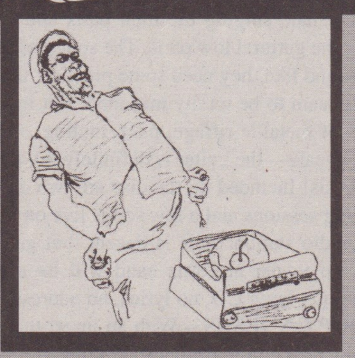

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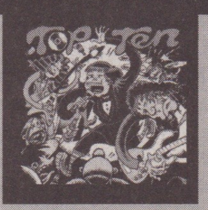

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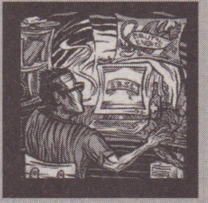

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*available in limited edition colored vinyl

ZINES

Send zines for review to: MRR, PO Box 460760, San Francisco, CA 94146. Please include the following info on a separate piece of paper with your zine: postpaid price, international price, do you take trades?, size, copied or printed?, number of pages, language, mailing address, website address, email address.

Reviews by:
(JD) Judy Balmin
(JB) Julia Booze
(JU) Justin Briggs
(KC) Karoline Collins
(LG) Layla Gibbon
(DG) Dan Goetz
(BG) Bob Goldie
(CH) Cassie Harwood
(MJ) Meredith Jones
(NM) Nick Mangel
(JM) Jeff Mason
(CR) Casey Ress
(CI) Cissie Scurlock
(DS) Dionne Stevens

ABANDON CITY #1-4 / $1.01-$2
8.5 x 5.5 – copied- 24 pgs

Abandon City is a comic about four dudes in Milwaukee who unknowingly survive some sort of terrorist attack that leaves everyone in the city dead. Their response is to drink all of the beer, rob dead people, throw shit out of windows, and eat mayonnaise in large portions. Apparently this is only the beginning of the story with more episodes to follow. It's not a terrible zine and the art is decent, but I'm not waiting with baited breath for the conclusion of this story. (CR)
2552 N. Booth St. / Milwaukee, WI 53212

ALIEN BOY / $8

Alien Boy is a beautifully assembled, silk-screened zine discussing the life and sad death of early Portland punk and schizophrenic James Chasse (the Wipers song "Alien Boy" was written about him). The zine contains interviews and stories with friends and acquaintances of James, clippings from his zine *Oregon Organism*, photos and flyers of old Portland bands (including Chasse's own Psychedelic Unknowns/Combos), and also includes a discussion with the guys making a documentary about Chasse's life and death—in 2006 he was brutally beaten to death by Portland cops. To top it all off, *Alien Boy* comes with a CD featuring two KBOO radio shows covering Chasse's story, which touch on the outrageousness of the cops actions, James' schizophrenia, and his memorial. I really enjoyed the pages with content from the *Oregon Organism*. James' zine was funny, biting, and innocent like all great teen punk zines. In general, the whole package of *Alien Boy* is filled with interesting, touching, and ultimately sad information. From the stories included, I get a real sense that James lived a difficult and depressed life, but his early punk days seemed like his funnest and most fulfulling years. His story is certainly a compelling, disturbing chapter in the history of punk and police brutality and I'm glad this zine exists to tell it. (CI)
Icky / P.O. Box 6834 / Portland, OR 97228
www.readingfrenzy.com

ANARCHY: A JOURNAL OF DESIRE ARMED #66 / $4.95 ($5.95 Canada)
8.5 x 11 – printed – 78 pages

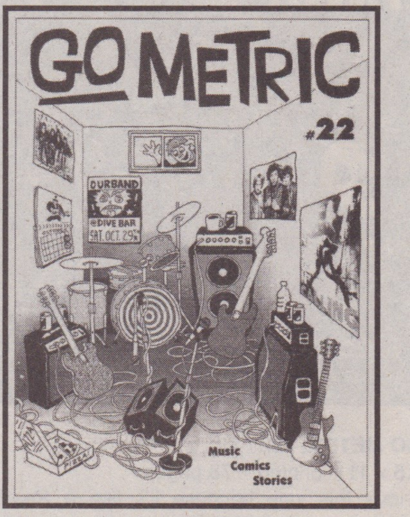
This would likely appeal to a similar audience as *Green Anarchy*, though it isn't exclusively green-leaning. Reading this cover-to-cover was a chore though, as the writing is pretty obtuse and full of academic jargon that does little to spell these ideas out for those not within "the movement" or at least "the academy" (ironically, the decent book reviews and entertaining letters section held my attention the most), so I suppose I am not the target audience. The cover story is "Anarchist Play Therapy," the tone of which is more NPR than Crimethinc; the opposite is true for the instructions for the "anarchy eights" card game. One article is called "On Sectarianism," which I take as thinly-veiled code speak for "green anarchists" unwillingness to accept criticism from anarcho-syndicalists. Personally, I don't think the issue as infighting so much as worldviews that are inevitably incompatible. Other articles touch on things such as past and present international struggles and reflections on the present state of anarchism. (DG)
C.A.L. Press / PO Box 3448 / Berkeley, CA 94703

BIG WHOOP #2 / donation, postage, or trade
5.5 x 8.5 – copied – 66pgs

I know exactly who will be receiving this zine next: my garage-rock lovin' best friend, that's who. Standard cut 'n' past layout spattered with cute drawings and interviews that I was able to dig in to, to me spells quality! I am totally gonna check out the Mosquito Bandito if he comes to my town, cute, talented and clever. There is a Jay Reatard interview for those of you that haven't heard enough outta him, The Swims, and Kill Me Tomorrow, columns offering up some truly useful advice, and band photos. This formula works when the content is solid, as it is in this healthy issue #2. (DS)
1182 Morning Drive / Santa Fe, NM 87507

DOLL #254 / $?
8.5 x 10 – printed – 124 pages – Japanese

Everyone's favorite "Super Head Magazine" is back. This issue's glossy special is on UK post-punk, specifically Ultravox (zzzz…) but of course there is some awesome coverage of the Japanese scene, which is really to the non-Japanese-speaker the main attraction of this glossy rag! Although this issue does have some other stuff like interviews with Los Violadores and Discarga, The Offenders, Swedish Punk, etc. Japanese stuff that is always useful are record reviews and ads to tell us about the new Japacore releases. Interviews with Nomares; BTH Records, The Stripper, Cosmic Neurose, Even Today, and many more! (NM)
No 303 Aota bldg. / 3-1-9, Kita, Kohenji / Suginami-Ku / Tokyo / Japan



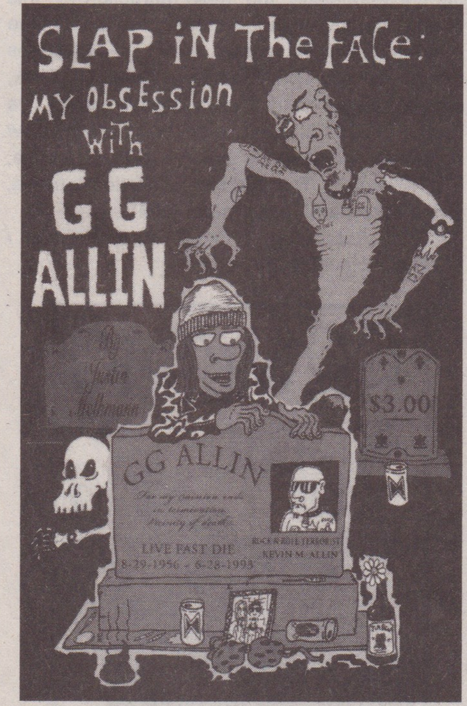
DOLL #255 / ?$
7 x 10.5 – printed – 130 pgs – Japanese

This issue of "super rock magazine" contains a big Cockney Rejects spread that seems quite thorough. There is a Germs section and loads of Japanese garage bands such as: The Radio Caroline, The Drops (7 girls and a boy…8 is More than enough), and The Chocolates. Some crustier looking bands are featured as well as some psych rockers and thrash dudes too. *Doll* is a visual feast that always leaves me frustrated in the same way. The good news is that the show listings are somewhat readable due to the band names being written in English. (DS)
No. 303 Aota Bldg / 3-1-9, Kita Kohenji / Suginami-ku, Tokyo / Japan

EARTH FIRST vol. 28 #6 / $4.50
17 x 11 – printed – 32 pgs

While I see politics as a very important, hell, integral, part of punk, I really find publications like this very dry and boring. Just being honest here, sorry. Within these covers you will find everything that you need to know about the struggle to save our big ol' mamma: who's fighting, who to fight, what they did that deserves a major ass beating, etc. If you're gonna be interested in this publication, it doesn't matter what I say to the end of pro or con. Don't get me wrong, I think *Earth First* is a worthy and informative paper and Earth First are some truly brave individuals who's work and efforts I whole heartedly think are right on, I just don't have the attention span to digest it all. (JU)

PO Box 3023 / Tuscon, AZ 85702
www.earthfirstjournal.org
collective@earthfirstjournal.org



GO METRIC #22 / $3
8.5 x 11 – printed – 78 pages

I love this zine because it's like a *Reader's Digest* for punks. I read it on a plane and that's where I recommend you read it. Specifically you. It's not always exactly on a punk topic, but all the stories are some hilarious anecdote written by someone kind of like you. My favorite story in this issue is called "I Have a Sexy Dad." It's about the author who grew up being raised by her dad who was a sexy Iranian soccer player and she always had to endure objectifying comments from her teachers and peers. She asked him to stop coming to school and he took it as though she was embarrassed by his foreign-ness and made her listen to a topical NPR radio piece to give her some perspective. It's hilarious basically. The other stories were also delightful, particularly "The Job Interview," which nearly becomes erotically thrilling at some point. Oh, and the story about one kid going to Taiwan with his sister to work in a hostess bar also should not be missed. I would venture to generally state that this issue contains mature content and should be enjoyed by a bonerful, horndoggedy audience. (JD)

801 Eagles Ridge Road / Brewster, NY 10509
gometric@yahoo.com
www.gometric.typepad.com

LEVIL UNIFORM #9 / $?
5.5 x 8.5 - printed - 16 pages

This looks and reads like a final project for a high school graphic design class that would've scored high marks for proficiency in whatever slick software was used, but would've lost some points for interesting content and aesthetics. In reality however, this was put together by a small staff, complete with "street pushers" and an intern. There's an interview with MDC that could've drawn on the band's close-to-30-year history but mostly asks inane questions about their name changes, an interview with skater Willis Kimbel and another with Sharon Toxic of the Toxic Vision clothing company, an anti-procreation rant, and of all things, a history of the necktie, all interspersed by skating pics. The back cover ad for a "metal snowboard DVD" has a few sponsors' logos at the bottom, with Nike and Oakley being among them. That's right, a review of a publication with an ad including the Nike logo is gracing the pages of *MRR*. (DG)

3004 NE 68th St. / Portland, OR 97213

LOS ALAMOS #5 / 3 Euros
8.5 x 11 – printed – 64 pages

Wow, this is a really well zone grincore/goregrind zine from Poland, where it seems all the best grindcore zines come from! This glossy rag has interviews with Squash Bowels, Suppository, Mad Butcher, Splitter, Artery Eruption, and tons of reviews, pictures, stuff about "Obscene Extreme" show, veganism, and animal rights! Glad to see this isn't an apolitical grind mag, there are too many of those. Also comes with the *Grind Down White Pride* CD-R comp with bands interviewed in the magazine. Very, very well done! (NM)

www.myspace.com/losalamoszine

MASS MOVEMENT #? / $4
8.25 x 11.75 – printed – 98 pgs

I have to say I was really bummed when I saw I had gotten this for review. Lots of interviews with shitty metal bands on major labels (ICED EARTH!?), bands that are at this point in time not even relevant to the Warped Tour crowd (LESS THAN JAKE, H20), and sub-par UK hardcore bands who make Euro MTV videos (GALLOWS.) There's a piece by Devon from CONQUEST FOR DEATH about meeting the guy that invented *D'n'D* and an interview with someone who publishes *D'n'D* style fiction, Abbadon Books. There are theme articles throughout where people like MUNICIPAL WASTE talk about something that ruined their life, mostly women and discovering metal it would seem. (LG)

Beer City / PO BOX 6035 / Milwaukee, WI 53226

MENTALLY ILL #1? / $1
5.5 x 8.25 – copied – 8 pgs.

This is a quick, jab-to-the-gut of a zine—a hand-drawn siren from a politically minded father/husband/writer who suffers from deep pockets of depression. *Mentally Ill* is a glimpse into Greg's mind in a few short pages of erratically-drawn comics—some drawn so faintly it's like he couldn't muster getting the pen to the page. (CH)

c/o G. Butterfield / 754 Washington Ave. 4R / Brooklyn, NY / 11238 / www.absent-cause.org

MIX-TAPERS DO IT BETTER #3 **/ YOUR DAY WILL COME** #2 / Free, trade, or donation
5.5 x 8 – copied – 28pgs

A split issue of two obsession-based zines. *Mix-Tapers Do It Better* champions the art of the mix-tape. Karen showcases several of her favorite tapes, complete with tracklists, gives tips on how to make better tapes, shares mix-tape experiences of the rich and famous, and tells stories about how she prefers to enjoy her tapes (on bike, be careful!). Other folks discuss their preference for the dying, portable analog format and also reveal bands that they were introduced to as a result of mix-tapes. In *Your Day Will Come,* John discusses his take on the works of David Lynch and goes into great detail (spoiler-phobes beware) of the plot of about a dozen horror movies, mostly old. For John, the more disturbing the better, and he even offers a contest encouraging folks to send him a movie disgusting enough to make him vomit! The obsessions of these two zinesters is infectious. I found myself interested to see many of the obscure movies John discussed, and *Mix-Tapers Do It Better* reminded me that I haven't made a mix-tape in years, but it used to be one of my favorite past-times. (CI)

Karen Heeringa / PO Box 6912 / Grand Rapids, MI 49516 / recycledyouth@hotmail.com
John Fahy / 15011 Lake View Dr #2402 / Fort Myers, FL 33919 / fahy_john@hotmail.com

MULTIPLICITIES #1-2 / 50¢ plus stamps
3.75 x 5.5 – copied – 8 pgs

Wow. I found these little booklets kind of hard to take. A modern-day girl's take on the confessional bi-polar grrrl-talk zines that were so prevalent when I was a teenager in the early-to-mid-'90s. Reminiscent of *Alien* and others early-'90s grrrl zines that use different voices to articulate the confusion of being a teenage girl/young adult in an oppressive world. I really couldn't relate at all, but I know that there are a lot of girls out there who need things like this to exist, and I don't wanna seem like a dismissive "over it" type. (LG)

Kira K / Riot Grrrrrrr Press / PO Box 20 / Athens, OH 45701

THE NIGHT OWL #3 / Free with SASE
8.5 x 11 – copied – one sheet

I get a kick out of this zine's author's cynicism: "I think someone needs to bring back that long cane that used to be used to drag people off stage if they sucked, but instead of dragging them off, they could just beat the band with it, publicly shaming them for crimes against music." Forget constructive criticism, this dude gets to the point! This one-sheet zine covers the usual slew of music zine content: band interview, gen-

eral rants about life sucking, record reviews. Interview with metal band Vicious Attack is appropriately offensive, as well as the record reviews. This one-sheet accomplishes what all short zines should—just enough info to not make you lose your patience or your attention span. (MJ)
Charles / 636 Mills St. / Hinsdale, IL 50521

NO CONVERSATION #1 / $2 or 4 stamps, $4 international, trades accepted
8.5 x 5.5 – copied – 25 pgs
This zine documents the author's trip to Sumatra a year ago. The trip is chronicled as a diary of events, but not really of personal thoughts or emotions. I didn't really get a feel for where the author was in their life, which might have added to reading about their journey. The only thing this zine leaves you with is some cool anecdotes and facts about life in Sumatra, but nothing particularly enlightening. (MJ)
Dean Hoof / PO Box 793 Ruidoso, NM 88355-0793

NO FUNERAL #4 / $1 ppd US, $2 ppd World
8.5 x 5.5 – copied – 12 pgs
It's not that this zine is bad, it's that it's kinda boring. Unless you are interested in the interview with Richard Johnson (which was partially unreadable because of a bad Xerox), the rest of this zine is pretty much limited to descriptive reviews on metal bands that are only worth your time if you are into that sort of thing. This zine might have benefited through more variety in subject matter or more visual stimulation. Personally, I was bored. (MJ)
Brian Cook / 2105 Ave. N Apt 2 / Huntsville, TX 77340

OX FANZINE #79 / ? 4.50
11.75 x 8.25 – printed – 130 pgs
I was pretty excited about reading this because I saw on the cover that this issue had an interview with TV Smith, but I forgot that *Ox* is written in German! Damn! This magazine, which has been going strong since the late '80s, is jam packed with tons of music, DVD, and zine reviews, lots of short interviews, and it even comes with a 27-track comp CD. I call it a magazine, though the cover reads *fanzine,* because it's a high quality print job much like *Big Takeover*. And just like that publication, this thing started off as a punk fanzine, but over the years has tended to expand its body of musical coverage to all forms of underground sounds. Some of the bands featured this time around are Less Than Jake, No Turning Back, Hot Water Music and Isis. I wish I understood German so I could read it. (BG)
PO Box 11 04 20 / 42664 Solingen / GERMANY
www.oxfanzine.de

PRISON FOCUS #31 (Summer 2008) / $2
8.5 x 11 – printed – 32 pgs
It is the human element to the writing that distinguishes this publication from others. I usually feel more depressed than anything when I read leftist literature, especially when the reporting is cynical and smarmy like a lot of the zines that I get for review. This one has a significant tone of compassion and motivation, so much that I felt *inspired* after reading it instead of just pissed. I think the reason for this shift is largely due to the fact that punks don't make this. The articles span the gamut of abuses and atrocities of prison issues worldwide but mostly here in the USA, including some writing by prisoners themselves. (JB)
Prison Focus / 1904 Franklin St. Ste 507 / Oakland, CA 94612

PRISONER'S DILEMMA #3 / $3
7.5 x 8.5 – copied – 40 pgs
A Seattle area zine made by labor activists under the premise that work is prison so we must band together to work for common goals. There are interviews with long running anarchist book store Left Bank Books, one with a student organization that fights for worker's rights on campus and Casa Latina, an organization that works to support and empower immigrants against workplace exploitation. The columns were earnest, if a little basic; I felt like the zine was aimed at college students in the first stages of radicalization. It was an easy interesting read however. (LG)
PO Box 95006 / Seattle, WA 98145-2006

RAZORCAKE #46 / $4 US
8.5 x 11 – printed – 112 pages
This zine is a lot like *MRR* in its content formula; it's got columns, band interviews, lots of ads, and album and zine reviews. I was intrigued by Designated Dave's run-in with the police. It's a to-be-continued, so I look forward to that in the next issue. It's about driving home from a gig all late at night and getting pulled over by a cop that simply doesn't believe that Dave is sober and the slapstick that ensues. The illustration of the officer that accompanies the clip is truly beauteous also. Nothing else in the issue really grabbed me, but I'm definitely not the intended audience for this magazine. I know that particularly, because in Rev. Norb's piece about eating vegetarian and using an artificial vagina, he actually uses the word "gay" in the fifteen-year-old douche-y-jock-asshole way several times. I shit on that. He wouldn't get published anywhere that any of my friends would ever read. It's 100% TV-style hetero-normative garbage and thusly completely, utterly, unacceptably lame. It left a filthy residue in my brain where this magazine entered. (JD)
PO Box 42129 / Los Angeles, CA 90042
www.razorcake.org

SCRAPPY J. #?/ $?
8.5 x 5.5 – copied – 44 pages
A personal-style zine, which is all stories—"stories about fighting," as the cover attests. It sort of flows a bunch of anecdotes together about arguments, scrappin' and so forth. I'm not a big perzine guy but the stories here are entertaining. (NM)
PO Box 4156 / Austin, TX 78765

SEVEN INCHES TO FREEDOM #6 / $1 US, $2 world, trade
8.5 x 5.5 – copied – 40 pgs
Seven Inches to Freedom is taking on the daunting task of putting Ft. Meyers, Florida on the map. It's great to see a very cool hardcore punk zine coming out of that godforsaken place! The early-'90s DIY aesthetic found in the pages brings back good memories of the golden age of punk zines before the tidal wave of shitty computer-layout jobs flooded the landscape. This issue is a "mostly" Florida issue, and it contains a history of the mighty Palatka, a write-up on Scrotum Grinder, and a review section of some of the author's favorite hardcore records from the land of angry white retirees. Having grown up in the Miami/Ft. Lauderdale scene in the late '80s and early '90s, I have to say that the Florida label discography is missing a lot of the decent stuff from that area. Regardless, I still totally dig this. A great how-to for making your own record jackets, a few columns, and a bunch of record reviews complete this recommended issue. (BG)
PO Box 457 / Ft. Meyers, FL 33902-0457

SLAP IN THE FACE: MY OBSESSION WITH GG ALLIN #1 / $?
10.25 x 6.5 – printed – 28 pgs
That title isn't just a clever play on words, this zine is a recount of the author's introduction and subsequent descent into GG fanboy-dom presented in a crudely done comic style, befitting the subject matter. I'll admit to an obsession of my own towards the rock 'n' roll animal that was Mr. Allen up to the middle of his "career," so this zine was of definite interest to me. There's not really much else to say. If you're a fan, you'll *be* a fan. (JU)
www.melkmanncomics.blogspot.com
jmelkmann@hotmail.com

SLINGSHOT #98 / $1, free for prisoners
17.5 x 11.5 – printed – 16 pgs
How weird when *1984*—like big brother shit—is going down even in the so-called progressive enclave of Berkeley. This newspaper-sized zine is the literary arm of the Long Haul Infoshop, an organization that's been around for a few decades as an activist community center, Internet access hangout, and anarchist library. Supposedly some "threatening" emails were sent to an animal research laboratory and the fuzz traced it back to one of the computers at the center. Next thing you know, a full-scale raid on the place occurs by county and federal officials and all the computers (and oddly the music CDs) are confiscated! Land of free speech, but be careful they don't call you a terrorist when you speak out against the system! Absolute bullshit. Anyway, in the face of obstructions, the zine prevails and this new issue is out with information about the raid, as well as the recent lost struggle to save the oak groove around the Berkeley campus. It was a long fight, but a giant sports center to cater to fucking jock assholes wins the day. It's the same all over America. The rest of the issue is full of other interesting and engaging articles dealing with political and environmental activism. This is only a buck and definitely an interesting read. (BG)
Slingshot / 3127 Shattuck Ave. / Berkeley, CA 94705
www.thelonghaul.org

SQUART #2 / $2
8.5 x 5.5 – copied – 24 pgs

Aah, the visuals. Some aspects of zinery get overlooked all the time. I don't see enough simplicity like this here lil' number. *Squart*, if I remember correctly, stands for squatting and art, and it started with wanting to commemorate and archive what would normally be the ephemera of street (ie public) art. The sparse writing has a tone of hopeful sharing and inspiring, with some seemingly random but really well written music reviews (not limited to either current or common releases, and not just punk), instructions for making a bike cart, and a color centerfold obituary for a beloved showspace. It is worth noting that the copy quality is really high, which is great because so much of the zine is pretty pictures of stencil and graffiti art in and around the American South and some of Mexico. Keep up the good work buddy! (JB)

c/o Never Give Up! / PO Box 436 / Waldo, FL 32694
nevergiveup@riseup.net

THREE CHORDS #10 / ?3
11.75 x 8.25 – printed – 108 pgs.

Too bad my crappy public school didn't offer German—rendering this zine illegible to my monolingual mind. Still, the awesomeness of *Three Chords* blasts through language barriers with thorough coverage of skateboarding, hardcore and even "fussball." In this issue: interviews with Plastic Bomb mailorder/distro/zine, author of the *FLEX! US Hardcore Discography* books, and bands Quest for Rescue, Dirty Money, Depressive State, Weakerthans, Sick of it All, Brutal Knights and more. (CH)

Bahnhofstr, 70 / 48143 / Munster, Germany / 0251-1449979
www.three-chords.de

THE TROUBLE WITH NORMAL #89 / $2
5.5 x 8.75 – copied – 48 pgs.

Here's another issue of expansive, exhaustive show reviews, interspersed with the author's anxieties about life and the state of the economy. This guy gets around, with reviews ranging from Benedict Arnold to Xiu Xiu. Issue #89 has a somewhat dysfunctional interview with Ian Mackaye about his band, The Evens. (CH)

PO Box 1444 / Colombia, MO / 65205 /
ttwn@hotmail.com

TRUST #131 / ?2.50
8.25 x 11.5 – printed – 60 pgs – German

Another month means another issue of Germany's longest standing punk zine (well, that's not entirely accurate as *Trust* is bi-monthly). If I was a better anglo, I'd know how to read this zine, as it goes though, I can only dream. This issue features interviews with Gern Blandsten Records, Dub Trio, Northern State, Kill Rock Stars Records, and a conversation between a gaggle of folks regarding online verses print that I absolutely wish I could read. Amongst other things, the reader is also treated to reviews, photos, what appears to be show listings, and columns. This zine is always a must for those that can read the Duetsch. (JU)

Postfach 11 07 62 / 28087 Bremen / Germany
http://www.trust-zine.de

TURNING THE TIDE Vol. 21 #5 / $?
11 x 17 – printed – 8pgs

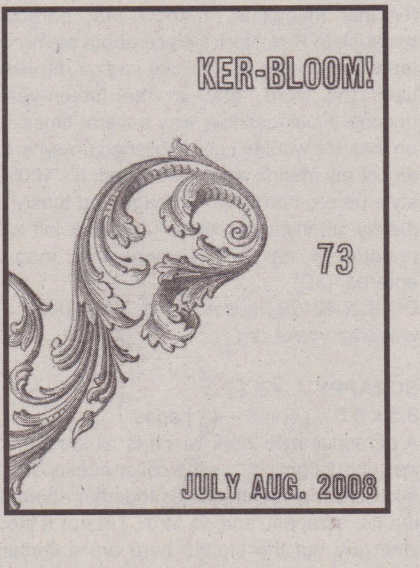
Another issue of the propaganda journal of the Anti-Racist Action network. This one features articles about the credit crisis, anti-Zionist Jews, the political situation in Bolivia, and public schools. The pages are filled out with some news about police brutality, corruption at radio stations, overviews of past and upcoming political and ARA-related rallies, and a couple of obits and memorials of anti-fascist activists, etc. The writing tends to be dry and very biased, but there's some valid information and history addressed for those that can get past all that. (CI)

PO Box 1055, Culver City, CA 90232

URINAL GUM #6 / $2
4.25 x 5.5 – copied- 44 pgs

Urinal Gum has only been around for six issues, but in that time it's become a pretty solid, entertaining zine. The humor is so bone dry that at times it's difficult to figure out what's a joke and what's serious. I think it's all a joke. This issue is the "politics issue" but uses such obtuse humor that I'm not sure if there's anything actually political in it. Contents include a review of the Country Fair, letters to politicians, how to survive the coming Armageddon, and a restaurant review. Extra points for the notes in the margins that contain such gems as; "It's a sad day when heterosexual couples can't get gay married" and "There's a one letter difference between 'man infestation' and 'manifestation'. (CR)

PO Box 1243 / Eugene, OR 7440
www.urinalgum.com
urinalgum@gmail.com



WELCOME TO FLAVOR COUNTRY #16 / postage
5.5 x 8.5 – copied – 12 pgs

This on-again-off-again perzine details the writer's acclimation to his new digs in Massachusetts. I like when these are short and concise, as I have said before. It is not quite as moving for me as say, *Ration* or *CursiveBomb*, yet it runs in the same vein. Bloody good. (DS)

Kurt Morris / 14 Taft St. #3 / Dorchester, MA 02125
welcometoflavorcountry@gmail.com

WESTSIDE ANGST / YOU split / #13 & #353 / $4ppd & free
8.5 x 5.5 – copied – 40 pgs

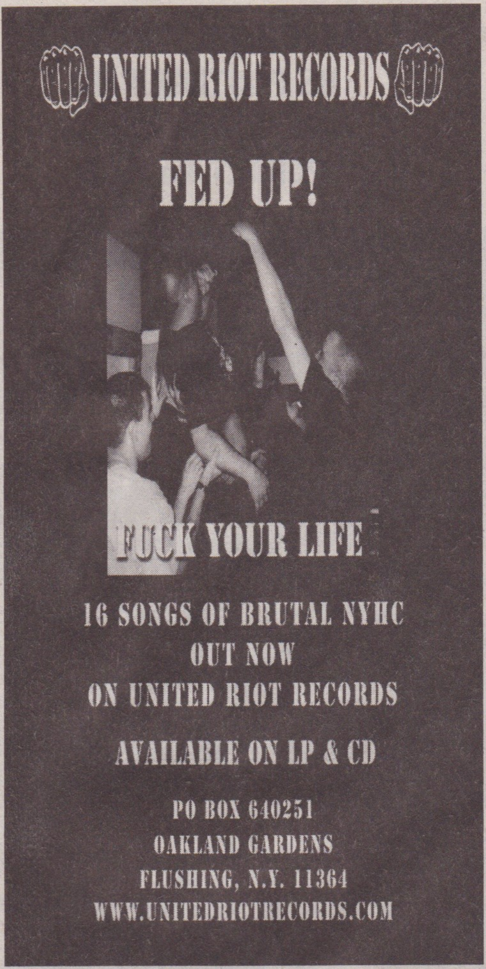
I've seen *You* before, years and years ago, and it seemed like a simple formula with consistently varied results. I guess the idea is people send in their personal letters with the recipient changed to "You" and it ends up as the zine, which unfolds the narrative of the Everyman, of the Universal truths that we all struggle against and for, and sometimes it comes out poignant and sometimes it is dribble that you can't believe someone actually printed. Before it was really nicely packaged like a real letter. This time around, it holds my attention and even establishes a little mystery and reflection, while incidentally also being entirely letters about or at least referring to metal. Yeah. Metal. This other zine, *Westside Angst* is subtitled "Valuable Lessons I learnt from Motörhead Written by an actual Doctor." I don't give much of a fuck about Motörhead, and you don't have to either, to *immensely* enjoy this shit. He lists a Motörhead song, tells you what it is about, and then tells you what he gets from it. *And* there are corresponding bitchin' album art renditions to further educate me. Basically, it's all I could ever want in a zine, totally hilarious and overly intellectual. He even talks about Judith Butler. Hello, are you married? I couldn't stop reading it out loud, and every song that was expounded could then easily greet my ears, thanks to the interweb. I love life! (JB)

West Side Angst / 1 Kanbara Street / Flinders Park / South Australia 5025 / Australia
You / c/o Luke You / PO Box 310 / Flinders Lane, Melbourne / Victoria 8009 / Australia
kanbara@senet.com.au

ZINE WORLD: A READER'S GUIDE TO THE UNDERGROUND PRESS #26/ $4 US $5 Canada
8.5 x 11 – copied – 62 pages

Well, this is awkward—reviewing a zine that exclusively reviews other zines. I accept this challenge. The cover is strikingly attractive. It is black print on a neon yellow colored paper with blue tape to sheath the stapled binding. The contents weren't quite as exciting, but I do really like the editor's snarky tone. The zine is very resource-y—classifieds, lists of zine libraries and infoshops by region, and other usefulness for writers and distributors of zines. But I'm not going to lie, it kind of felt like I was casually flipping through the phonebook. It's probably much more interesting if you're looking for something specific. There is a little bit of non-review content, but not much in this issue due to lack of volunteers. (JD)

PO Box 330156 / Murfreesboro, Tennessee 37133-0156
www.undergroundpress.org
distro-us@undergroundpress.org


UNITED RIOT RECORDS

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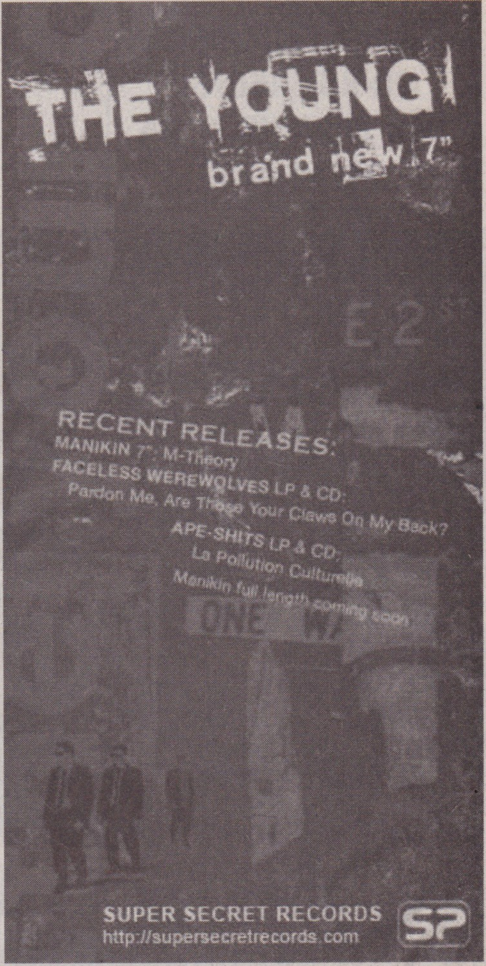
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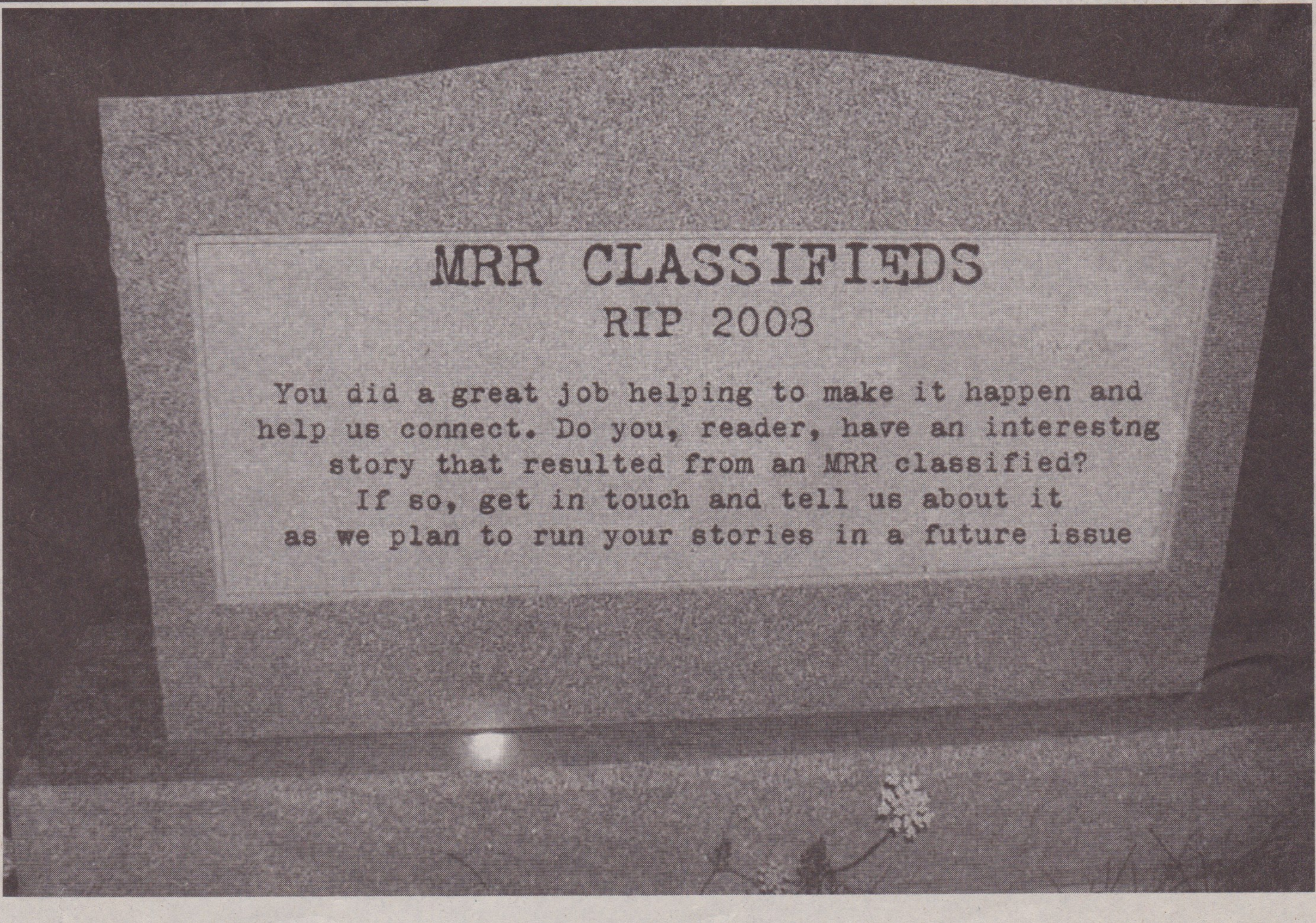

MRR CLASSIFIEDS

RIP 2008

You did a great job helping to make it happen and help us connect. Do you, reader, have an interestng story that resulted from an MRR classified? If so, get in touch and tell us about it as we plan to run your stories in a future issue

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prelude to tyranny

Deathcycle
prelude to tyranny

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TERROR OF THE NORTH EAST:
2004-2007

BLACK SS
TERROR OF THE NORTH EAST: 2004 - 2007

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BLACK SS recording history includes two demos, two split EPs with both RAINING BRICKS and HOW WE ARE, a self titled EP as well as a full length LP. To save you the time of mining all these nuggets separately, the Reaper Records prospectors have panned the muddy creeks of recording tape to bring you the bounty.

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Debut full length, featuring members of NO TRIGGER! For fans of DESCENDENTS and NOFX.

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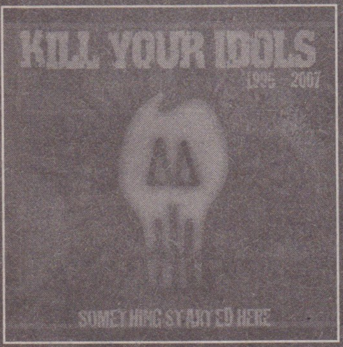

KILL YOUR IDOLS
SOMETHING STARTED HERE 1995 - 2007

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Limited pressing of 1,250 includes five colored 7"s collecting most of the EP, splits and comp tracks recorded by New York hardcore legends **KILL YOUR IDOLS**. Also included in the package: two-color 6.5" x 6.5" screened poster, pin, patch, sticker and very extensive liner notes.

GET OUTTA TOWN

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SEIZURES IN BARREN PRAISE

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deathwish

touché amoré
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NO SLEEP records

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START TODAY

GORILLA BISCUITS
START TODAY

CD/LP OUT NOW! on Revelation Records

Over the years, few records have earned the distinction of "classic." Within the punk and hardcore realm, even fewer have made an impact on the way an entire genre sounds. At the top of that small list, however, is **GORILLA BISCUITS**' *Start Today.*

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